
Workforce Innovation & Opportunities Act: Regional and Local Plans

Northwest Region

Program Year 2016 - 2020

Networks Northwest is a regional organization covering the ten counties of Northwestern Lower Michigan, providing programs and services in the areas of Talent, Business, and Community Development. We serve as the region's economic development Collaborative Development Council, the Regional Planning organization, the Michigan Works! Agency, and the state's first Regional Prosperity Board. The Workforce Innovation & Opportunities Act (WIOA) represents a significant proportion of the agency's funding and service mix; additional, partner and correlating programs also fall under the Networks Northwest umbrella. It is the goal of the agency to leverage all funding sources for their highest and best use, to achieve efficiencies in administration, and yet to provide the highest quality services to the individuals and employers in the region.

This plan outlines both the regional strategies and the local area operations related to WIOA. Many of these elements are interrelated with multiple other services, provided internally and/or externally. One of the hallmarks of Networks Northwest is collaboration in public-private partnerships. This is certainly the case of implementing WIOA, the process used to develop these strategies, and the future of providing workforce development services.

The mission of Networks Northwest is to build stronger communities and enhance the quality of life in Northwest Michigan by providing a regional framework for effective collaboration among integrated service networks, and by directly providing services related to talent, business, and community development. This dual role of regional leadership and convener of networks at a strategic level, along with frontline operations, makes us uniquely positioned to lead regional conversations and strategy development related to talent.

As such, we submit this plan for Northwest Michigan's implementation of the Workforce Innovation & Opportunities Act, effective from Program Year 2016 through 2020.

Contents

Planning Process	5
Regional Analysis.....	7
Population Information.....	7
Labor Market Information	7
Geographic Factors	11
In-demand Skills	11
Skills for In-demand industries and occupations	12
In-Demand Industry Sectors	16
Advanced Manufacturing.....	16
Agriculture	17
Automotive, Construction and Transportation.....	18
Healthcare.....	19
Hospitality	20
Information and Business Services	21
Regional Workforce Development Activities.....	22
Regional Strategies	23
Serving the Hardest to Serve	23
Employer Engagement.....	24
Career Pathways	24
Increasing Awareness of In-demand Occupations.....	25
Veterans Services	25
Apprenticeship	26
Sector Initiatives	26
Coordination of Supportive Services	27
Coordination with Economic Development.....	29
Collaborative Development Council	29
Regional Prosperity Board	29
Performance Measures – Regional Negotiation	30
Labor Market Data and Economic Conditions	31
Strategic Vision	31
Alignment of Local Resources and across Core Programs.....	32
Workforce Development System.....	33

Programs	33
Self-Directed Services	34
Career Services.....	34
Veterans Services	35
Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling	35
Training Services	36
Youth Services.....	37
Business Services	37
Local Coordination	38
Access to Services	39
Employer Engagement using Sector Initiatives	41
Advanced Manufacturing.....	41
Agriculture	42
Automotive, Transportation and Construction.....	43
Healthcare	44
Hospitality	44
Information and Business Services	45
Coordination with Unemployment Insurance Programs	45
Coordination with Economic Development Services.....	46
Collaborative Development Council	46
Joint Retention Visits	46
Business Enhancement Teams.....	46
Entrepreneurial skills	47
One-Stop Delivery System	47
Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment & Training Activities.....	51
Career Services, Basic and Individualized	51
Training Services	52
Youth Workforce Investment Activities.....	53
Out-of-School Youth	55
In-School Youth	56
Coordination with Education	57
Supportive Services.....	58
Coordination with Supportive Services.....	59

Coordination with Adult Education	59
MOUs	61
Grant Recipient	61
High-Performing Board	61
Individual Training Accounts.....	63
Public Comment.....	63
Technology Integration.....	64
Priority of Service	64
Rapid Response.....	65
Appendix A: Hot Jobs Report	67
Appendix B: Workforce Development Board Strategic Agenda	68
Appendix C: Strategic Agenda List of Activities	69
Appendix D: CPR (Completion, Placement, Retention) Matrix.....	70
Appendix E: Occupational Training Checklist and Occupational Training Agreement	71
Appendix F: Local Policy defining Youth Who Need Additional Assistance.....	72
Appendix G: Local Supportive Services Policy	73
Appendix H: Memorandum of Agreement regarding Adult Education collaboration.....	74
Appendix I: Networks Northwest Board Vision and Mission.....	75
Appendix J: Local Policy on Priority of Service.....	76
Appendix K: Local Rapid Response Policy	77

I. Workforce Innovation & Opportunities Act Regional Plan

Planning Process

In 2014, Networks Northwest coordinated a robust, comprehensive, and region-wide public input campaign to explore several factors that make a region prosperous and resilient. This effort aligned with Governor Snyder's call for Regional Prosperity Plans, and the result was a series of reports called [Framework for Our Future](http://www.networksnorthwest.org/framework). Each of the reports, along with supplemental documents, focused on 9 key community topics:

- **Growth & Investment**, including a Community Placemaking Guidebook, an inventory of Commercial Corridors, and a seasonal population analysis;
- **Housing**, including inventory of housing stock by county, target market analyses by county, and a guide for employers seeking to provide housing supports to their workforce;
- **Transportation**, including a regional Transportation Improvement Plan, a report of access to non-emergency transportation for healthcare needs, and a Citizen's Guide to Transportation Planning;
- **Arts & Culture**;
- **Recreation**;
- **Talent**, including a needs assessment of manufacturing companies in the region, and a report of in-demand occupations;
- **Healthy Communities**;
- **Food & Farming**.

Links to each of the reports and supporting documents listed above can be found at www.networksnorthwest.org/framework.

Collectively, these reports comprise the Regional Prosperity Plan for Northwest Michigan. The collaboration necessary to evaluate the relevant data, develop strategies, and identify potential resources for implementation was unprecedented. Dozens of organizations were involved in creating the plans, through stakeholder input and public awareness activities.

Primarily, local partners took part in the planning activities through participation in networks that focus on the topic area. These networks are convened by Networks Northwest, with the exception of Arts & Culture and Food & Farming. However, all networks participated and supported the process.

In order to adequately plan for coordinated and effective WIOA services, the Networks Northwest board served as the network for the Talent topic. Board membership is comprised of multiple WIOA partner agencies, and includes representation from all four core WIOA programs. Additional membership represents supportive services agencies, local units of government, philanthropic organizations, and in-demand industry sectors. The board's leadership in the region is recognized and respected partially because of its vast membership and robust representation of the communities served.

Public input sessions for purposes of the Regional Prosperity Plan were focused on challenges identified by the board, and potential strategies included in the Board's Strategic Agenda (see the Strategic Vision section in the Local Plan). Members of the public were given a structured opportunity to brainstorm new strategies for solving Talent Development challenges, such as the occupational skills gap, barriers to employment, and talent attraction.

In order to garner input from groups that represent the full scope of the region's population, the following public input mechanisms were used:

- Focus Groups with migrant and seasonal farmworkers, senior citizens, low-income groups, and single parents;
- Online public comment, conversation, and brainstorming;
- Public Input "Expos" held during afternoon and evening hours at accessible locations throughout the region;
- Talent Lunches with local employers.

Networks Northwest partnered with the Traverse Bay Poverty Reduction Initiative to encourage and ensure public participation by individuals living in poverty at any and all public input opportunities. A partnership was also formed with the Disability Network, who facilitated participation by people with disabilities.

These numerous and varied public input opportunities informed both the Regional Prosperity Plan and the WIOA Plan. In addition to the process described above, the Networks Northwest board further explored several aspects of WIOA, especially those that mean change in programming for the region. They held focused conversations on the following priority areas:

- Youth program changes
- Serving the Hardest to Serve
- Employer Engagement
- Industry-Recognized Credentials
- Career Pathways

The Title IV core WIOA program provider, Michigan Rehabilitation Services, is represented on the board and so participated in the process. Title II Adult Education is also represented on the board and participated. However, additional engagement was conducted with the MRS district manager and the Adult Education coordinator to emphasize core program involvement.

The numerous aspects of this process, thorough exploration of these issues, and subsequent creative brainstorming have informed the strategies, program design, and goals of this plan.

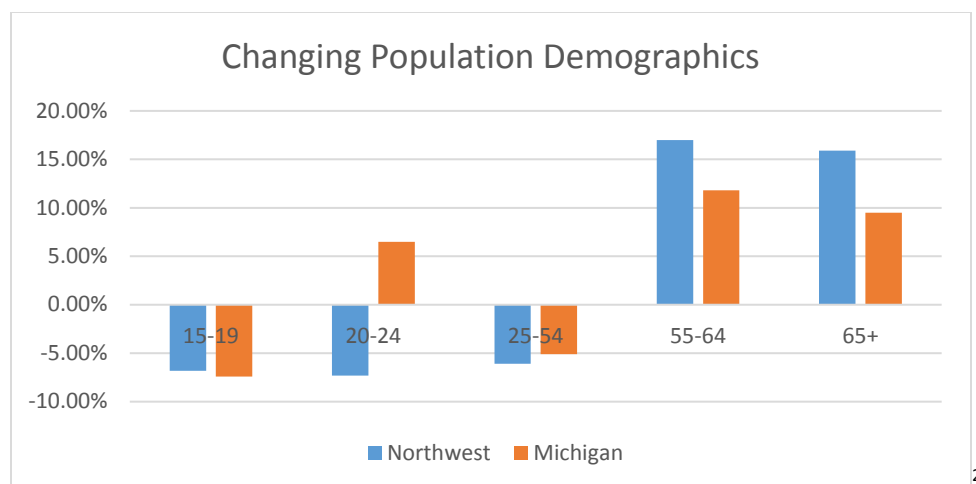
Regional Analysis

Below is an analysis of regional labor market data and economic conditions. This analysis includes existing in-demand industry sectors and occupations, the employment needs of employers in those sectors, as well as labor market data, trends, educational levels, and more.

Population Information

The population of the Northwest region, consisting of ten counties, is 303,000, according to the latest estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau. The population has grown in the last five years by approximately 7,000 people, or +2.3%. This is a higher percentage increase than the state's decrease of -0.5%, but less than the 4.7% increase nationwide. Most of the increase in population for the region occurred in Grand Traverse County, which grew by 6.1%. Wexford County also grew significantly at 4.6%, but some counties lost population: Antrim -2.9% and Emmet -1.5%. ¹

The nature of the increases in population is important to note, as it has significant ramifications for the workforce. Although the overall population increased, most of the increase occurred among older workers and those at or beyond retirement age. The population of working age residents actually decreased. The ramifications of these changing demographics mean that our region has a higher demand for services, but fewer workers to meet that demand. The chart below shows the population change by age cohort.



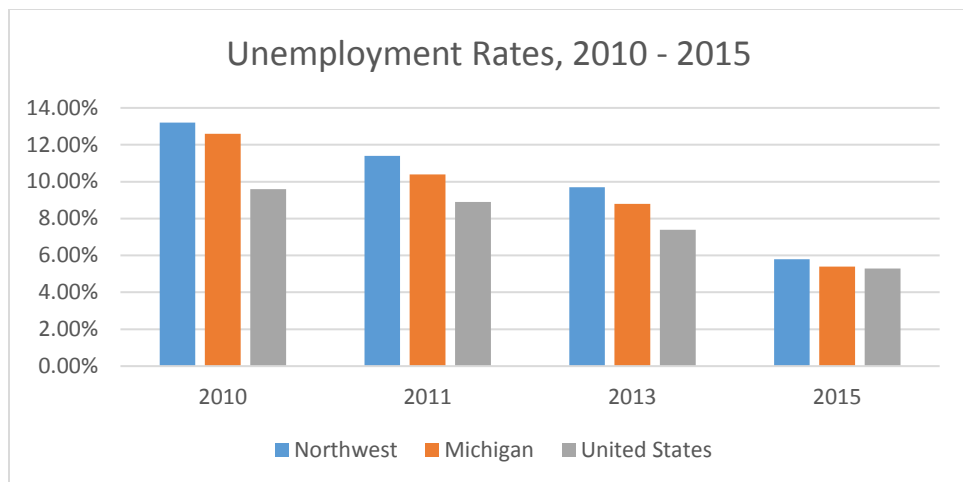
Labor Market Information

As of April, 2016, the unemployment rate for the Northwest Michigan region is 5.5%. This is higher than both the state's average of 4.8% and the national rate of 5.0%. The counties within the region range from a low of 4.0% in Grand Traverse to a high of 7.6% in Antrim. The trend over time, however, is consistent with both state and national decreases since 2010. ³

¹ US Bureau of the Census, Annual Population Estimates, 2015

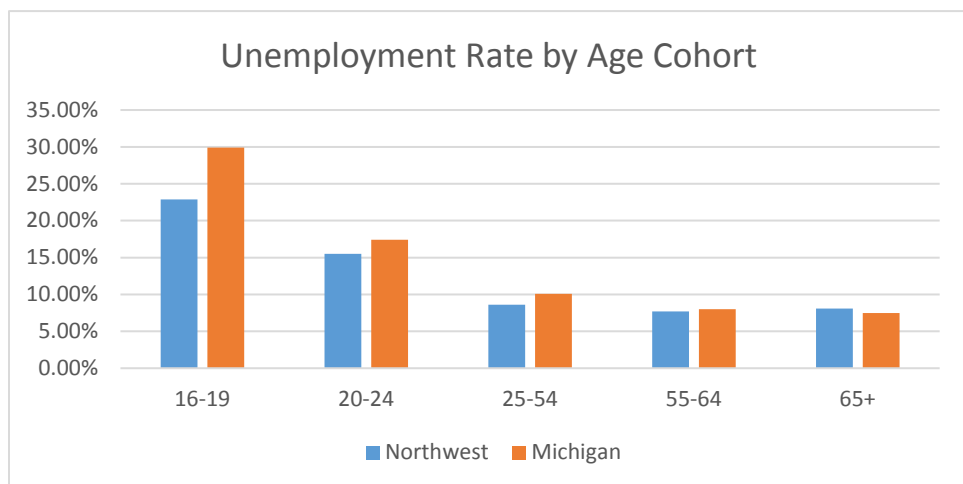
² US Bureau of the Census, 2010-2014 American Community Survey Five-year Estimates

³ Department of Technology, Management and Budget (DTMB), US Bureau of Labor Statistics, [as presented by Networks Northwest](#), 2016



The number of individuals in the job force decreased significantly from its peak prior to the recession, of 167,953 in June of 2007. Following that month, the labor force number decreased to a low of 140,886 in May of 2012. From 2011, the annual average in the labor pool increased from 146,822 to 148,396 in 2015. While the trend is in the positive direction, this number is still significantly lower than it was before the recession.⁵ This loss of workforce in the region is one of several reasons that employers are currently struggling to find qualified candidates for their open positions.

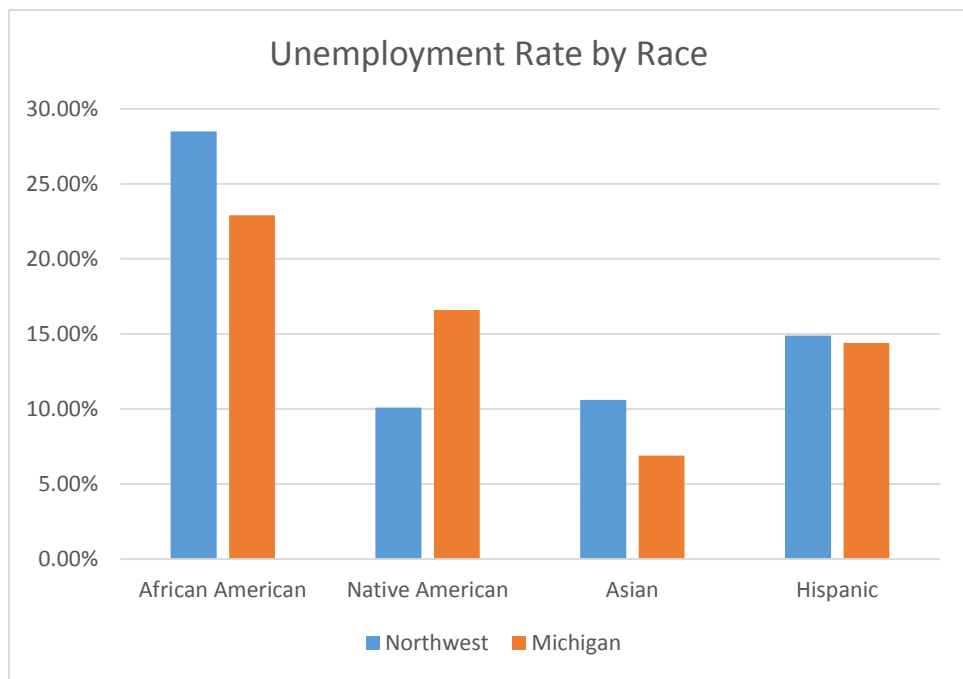
It is important to look in more detail at unemployment indicators, in order to fully understand the nature of the workforce. Unemployment rates are higher for youth and young adults in our region, and significantly higher for African and Native American minorities. All racial minorities have a higher unemployment rate than the overall population.



⁴ DTMB, BLMISI, Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS), 2015

⁵ Department of Technology, Management and Budget (DTMB), US Bureau of Labor Statistics, [as presented by Networks Northwest](#), 2016

⁶ US Bureau of the Census, 2010-2014 American Community Survey Five-year Estimates



During the recession, long-term unemployment was high. In 2010, 51% of all unemployed individuals were out of work for 27 weeks or more. Since then, the amount has decreased to 38% in 2015. However, this is still higher than the statewide average of 30%. This may be explained by the seasonal nature of the tourism portion of the economy in the region.⁸

Approximately 43,000 people, or 14.1% of the population in the region, report having a disability that limits or interferes with their activities of daily living. A significant proportion of them, 43%, are 65 years of age or older. Very few are minorities, with African American and Hispanics at 1% and 2% respectively. Only 21% of those with a disability participate in the labor force, compared to 67% of those without a disability. In addition, when active in the labor force, individuals with a disability have a much higher unemployment rate – 13.5% -- than the overall unemployment rate.⁹ This indicates opportunity to provide employment to those with a disability, and to assist employers in filling their open positions.

The number of individuals receiving any kind of public assistance during 2014 was 12,200. Public assistance includes food assistance, child welfare, utility support, as well as cash assistance. The percentage of individuals on public assistance is much lower in our region than the state overall: 3.9% compared to 5.5%. The trend shows decreases over time in the use of public assistance, with a 29.9% decrease from 2011 to 2014.¹⁰

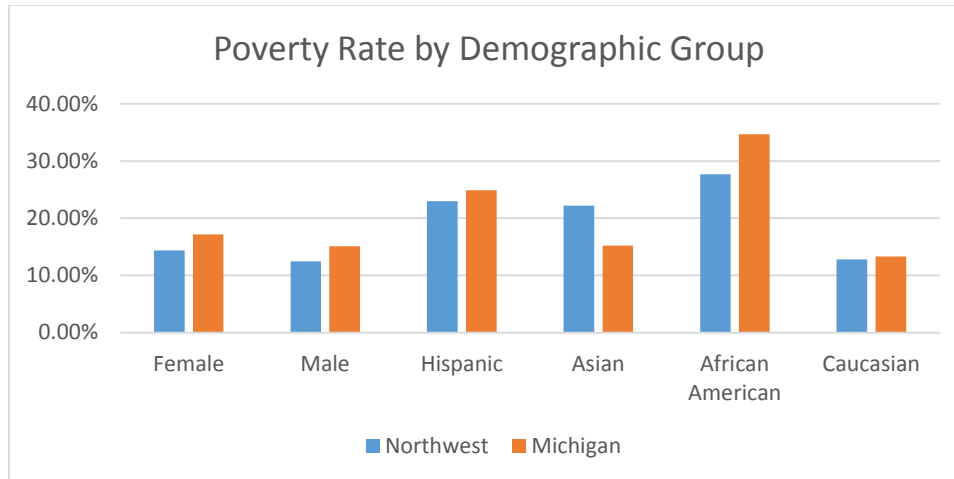
⁷ US Bureau of the Census, 2010-2014 American Community Survey Five-year Estimates

⁸ BLMISI, 2016

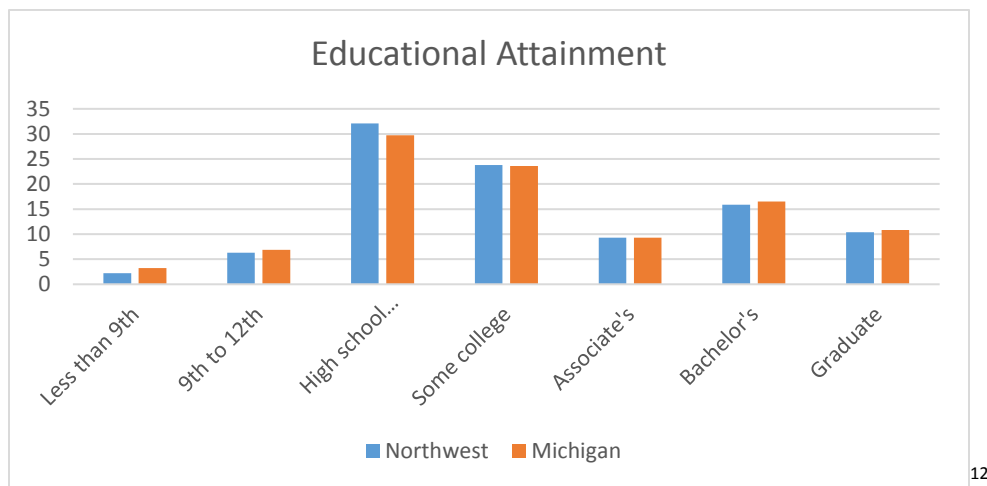
⁹ BLMISI, 2016

¹⁰ Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), 2014

The poverty rate was 13.4% of the total population in 2014. This is 2.8 percentage points below the state's poverty rate. Almost all demographic groups follow this trend, with lower poverty rates in our region than at the state level. However, all racial minorities have significantly higher poverty levels than the Caucasian population.¹¹



The skills and abilities of the region's workforce are indicated by several factors, one of which is educational attainment. The Northwest region is on trend with state averages regarding attainment of educational milestones. We are slightly higher than the state for percentage of individuals with a high school diploma or GED, and slightly lower than the state average for those with a Bachelor's Degree.



¹¹ US Bureau of the Census, 2010-2014 American Community Survey Five-year Estimates

¹² US Bureau of the Census, 2010-2014 American Community Survey Five-year Estimates

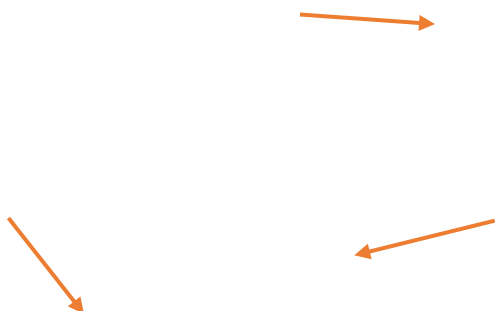
Geographic Factors

The ten-county region of Northwest Michigan is rural in nature and geographically expansive, totaling more than 4,700 square miles, not including the numerous inland lakes and rivers. Because it is so large, the local area has divided the region into sub-regions, as follows:

- **North:** Charlevoix and Emmet Counties;
- **Middle:** Leelanau, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, and Antrim Counties;
- **South:** Wexford and Missaukee Counties; and
- **West:** Benzie and Manistee Counties.

These subdivisions allow for easier planning and program delivery. The counties assigned to each subdivision follow the labor shed and commuting patterns for the area.

In addition to the vast size of the region, commuting and transportation in general are complicated by scattered bodies of water. For instance, Lake Charlevoix in Charlevoix county runs Northwest to Southeast across the county, Torch Lake runs North to South in Antrim County, and the North and South arms of Lake Leelanau split part of Leelanau County in two. These numerous bodies of water present significant challenges both for commuters and for companies transporting goods to and from the area. Examples such as these are abundant throughout the region.



In-demand Skills

Networks Northwest has developed and refined a demand-driven, employer needs-based strategy for design and implementation of all workforce programs. This strategy is based on the premise that meeting employer needs is the best way to serve job seekers.

Determination of employer needs and demand occupations in the region is a complex and fluid process. It is the responsibility of Networks Northwest administrative staff to ensure that federal and state workforce funding is invested in the most efficient and effective manner.

The Northwest Michigan Workforce Development Board has identified six priority industry clusters for the Northwest region. These clusters align with the State of Michigan's five clusters, along with an additional cluster that is specific to the region. They are: Advanced Manufacturing; Agriculture; Construction and Transportation; Healthcare; Hospitality; and Information and Business Services. The demand occupations within each cluster are created using state labor market information, occupational projections, trends in job postings, and demand from employers based on local-level relationships. The list of in-demand occupations, organized by cluster, is available through our Hot Jobs Report publication (Appendix A). This serves both as a means for increasing awareness of in-demand jobs and career options, as well as the approved list of occupations for training.

Skills for In-demand industries and occupations

Occupational, technical, and "soft" skills are all fundamental for the workforce: in order for workers to move into jobs that are accessible, fulfilling, and pay a wage that provides for a family, they must possess the right combination of necessary skills. However employers participating in forums and responding to surveys by workforce entities and educational institutions, report that many in Northwest Michigan's workforce lack the skills needed to obtain good jobs, including occupational skills, employability skills like work ethic; technical skills like the ability to use a computer; communication skills; and basic academic skills like math and reading.

As workers struggle to find jobs for which they're qualified, employers throughout the region face challenges in finding qualified candidates to fill their open positions. In some cases, they receive applications from job seekers who do not have the skills necessary for the job; in other cases, they receive no applications at all. This dynamic reflects a "skills gap," which refers to the discrepancy between the specific skills that employers need and the skills that are currently held by the workforce. The severity of a skills gap can vary based on industry or occupation, by region, and by employer expectations.

Employability skills

Employability skills are those that are applicable to every job, in every community. They include such skills as teamwork, reliability, respect, adaptability, and staying focused on the job, among many others. They are sometimes referred to as "soft skills," but should not be seen as insignificant. These abilities are often first on the list when employers are asked what they look for in hiring new employees. They are also the most common reason for termination.

Digital Literacy

In today's economy, almost every job requires use of technology, even prior to beginning employment: more and more employers are using online systems for job applications. Anyone with low levels of computer literacy is thus at an instant disadvantage when it comes to applying for and performing on a job. An individual's technology literacy is dependent upon his or her access to equipment—whether a personal computer, smart phone, or other devices. Regular use of technology is necessary in order to learn its various applications, and to prepare a job seeker for using it on the job. When access to technology is limited due to poverty, a "digital divide" occurs: those living in poverty are less likely to succeed in today's job market, due in part to limited technological skills and abilities. School systems across the region are attempting to bridge this divide by integrating computers into the classroom and providing iPads or laptops to students. However, school systems in affluent communities are better positioned to provide this additional equipment to their students than those in poverty-prone areas.

Another factor influencing digital literacy is the availability of broadband infrastructure. High speed internet is essential to using technology and learning its applications in the workplace. This infrastructure is available in most areas of the region, but is most common in densely populated areas. Broadband is available in all of the region's growth and investment areas; however, fiber— which provides ultra-high Internet speeds—is only available in a handful of communities, and many parts of the region, particularly rural areas, still depend on dial-up Internet.

Basic Academic Skills

As the State of Michigan and the region transition into the knowledge economy, the nature of employment is continuously changing. Jobs of all types require more occupational training, higher levels of math, and stronger language and communication skills. Poor math skills, in particular, present obstacles to employment for many workers who have been laid off from obsolete jobs, and now lack the math skills necessary to compete in today's job market. Their use of math on previous jobs was minimal or non-existent; but now, in order to retrain for in-demand positions, these workers need to re-learn math from a very basic level, either through university programs, Adult Education, or non-credit courses at postsecondary institutions.

For those working toward a degree, postsecondary institutions report increasing enrollment in remedial classes. While these high school-level, non-credit classes rarely count toward a degree program, they cost tuition fees for the student, and can use up the limited financial assistance available. However, these skills are necessary for a student who is not well prepared for college-level academics.

For workers who need remediation in basic skills, Adult Education programs provide free access to basic academic learning, both in preparation for a High School Equivalency Certificate and preparing to transition to postsecondary training. However, Adult Education has seen tremendous decrease in public funding. State aid for adult education funding in Michigan decreased from \$80 million in 2004 to \$20 million in 2014. This has caused a corresponding decrease in availability of services, including closure of facilities and access points. There are gaps in the region where customers of adult education services must travel long distances—sometimes an hour one-way—to attend the program. Distance learning services have been set up to partially accommodate this; however, these students often don't have access to computers at home, or are not comfortable or successful with distance learning methods.

Occupational Skills

Occupational Skills are those skills that are specific to a given occupation. For instance, a Certified Nurse Aide must be able to take vital signs; welders need a certain competency level in using a welding torch; and software developers must master various coding languages. A skills gap can occur for these occupational skills when training is not available, when training is available but students do not participate in the programs or do not possess the basic academic skills to succeed in the programs, or when the community is unaware of the demand for the occupation.

Local employers have expressed need for skills and certificates in their respective industries. The list below is a known sampling of the employer needs, at a minimum:

Advanced Manufacturing: Process improvement/Lean, safety, 3D Printing, machine setup and operation, blueprint reading, welding, robotics, hydraulics, and design.

Agriculture: Knowledge of seasonal crops for the region, food safety, Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Handling Practices (GHP), harvesting, processing, packaging, and logistics.

Automotive, Construction and Transportation: Site safety including OSHA-10, measuring, cutting, framework, carpentry, HVAC, electrical, energy efficiency, CDL, and CDL endorsements including Hazmat.

Healthcare: Certified Nurse Aid (C.N.A.), first aid, vital signs, medical terminology, medical billing, Registered Nurse (RN), RN specializations including pediatric and cardiac care, surgical technology, dementia care, and home health.

Hospitality: customer service, ServSafe, TIPS, phone etiquette, food prep, restaurant management, culinary chef, landscaping, gaming dealers, and hotel management.

Information and Business Services: Sales, supervisor/management, software development, computer programming including, network administration including Cisco, marketing, and insurance.

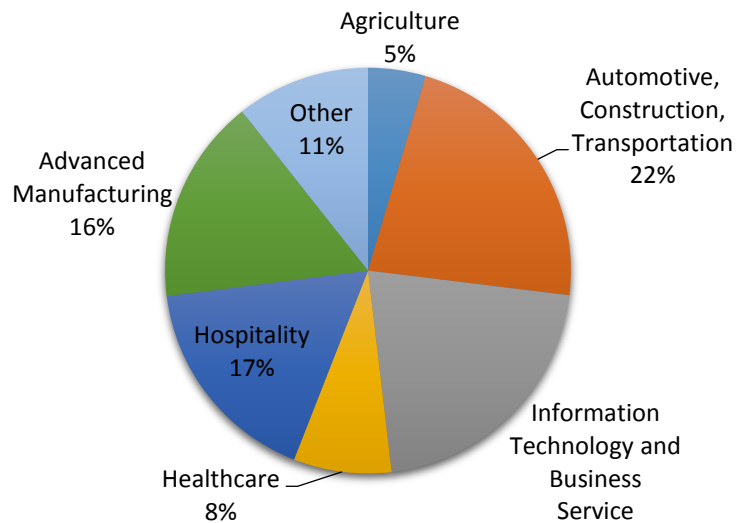
An analysis of Pure Michigan Talent Connect (PMTTC) shows mismatches between the availability of talent with the occupational skills needed for each industry, compared to the number of job postings. In some cases, the number of job seekers vastly outnumbers the job postings, and in other cases the opposite is true. This variation indicates that for Healthcare and Hospitality, there is truly a shortage of workers with the necessary skills. For the other industry sectors, more analysis should be done to determine why employers are struggling to find talent. It can be speculated that those with PMTTC profiles that indicate occupational skill sets in Advanced Manufacturing, for instance, may have outdated skills and need training in order to obtain the more technical positions currently open.

Supply and Demand Comparison: skill sets of job seekers vs. open positions

Category¹³	# Job Seekers	# Positions Posted
Advanced Manufacturing	7,006	5,167
Agriculture	1,963	1,777
Automotive, Construction and Transportation	9,574	3,962
Healthcare	3,342	6,837
Hospitality	7,301	15,744
Information Technology and Business Service	9,077	6,141
Other	4,562	1,803

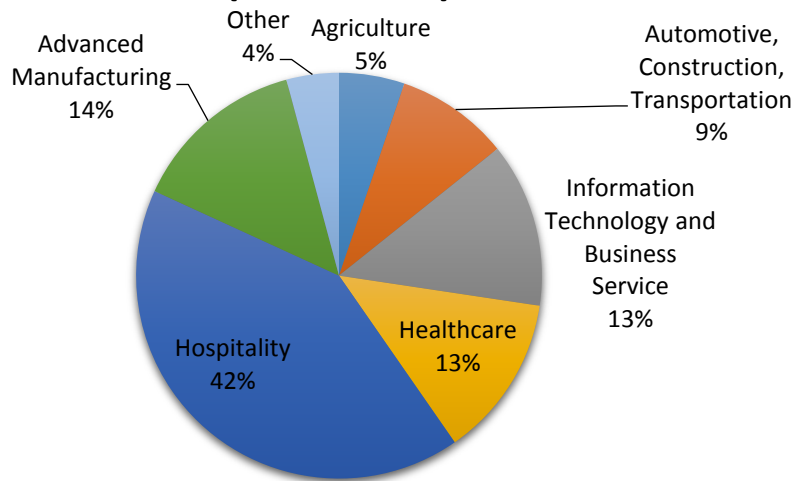
¹³ Pure Michigan Talent Connect, June 2016

Supply: Occupational Skills of the Workforce (June 2016)



14

Demand: Occupational Skills Desired (June 2016)



15

¹⁴ Pure Michigan Talent Connect, June 2016

¹⁵ Pure Michigan Talent Connect, June 2016

In-Demand Industry Sectors

Below are descriptions of the multiple factors that influence the economic vitality of the six in-demand industry sectors, including projected jobs, anecdotal information from local businesses, and regionally-specific influences. The source for all industry and occupation projections is Economic Modeling Systems, Inc., 2016.

Advanced Manufacturing

In recent years, a combination of factors has contributed to the emergence of a nationwide manufacturing-specific skills gap that is clearly impacting Northwest Michigan. Ten to twenty years ago, many manufacturing companies went out of business when contracts for automotive manufacturing were transferred to foreign competitors. Dislocated workers and their families experienced traumatic times, losing their financial security and domestic stability. Entire communities were impacted; due to the loss of these base jobs, other businesses were forced to close, such as restaurants and retail stores.

Manufacturing is now making a comeback and is more technologically complex and sophisticated. The companies that diversified, invested in new technology, and pursued global customers are now thriving. However, the perception that manufacturing jobs are unstable and the memory of the trauma to our communities still lingers; and many students are not interested in pursuing training in manufacturing fields. Therefore, some career tech and postsecondary programs have closed due to low enrollment, leaving few options for training new and younger members of the workforce in these in-demand occupations. Meanwhile, workers who were dislocated in the economic downturn do not have the more advanced skills to move into these new high tech manufacturing positions. These skills include knowledge of and competence in processes, machinery, materials, and tools.

The good news is that advanced manufacturing jobs are on the rise, despite the downturns from the past. They are also year-round, full-time positions, and often provide benefits. Manufacturing jobs pay more than jobs in some other industries.

Industry	2015 Jobs	2025 Jobs	Numeric Change	% Change
31 Manufacturing ¹⁶	14,974	15,631	657	4%

The manufacturing industry currently employs almost 15,000 individuals at more than 500 businesses in Northwest Michigan. Seventy percent of manufacturing jobs in the region are located in Grand Traverse, Wexford, and Charlevoix Counties. Northwest Michigan manufacturing businesses serve a variety of industries. There is still a large supplier relationship to the automotive industry, but manufacturers in the region also produce components and goods for the food service, medical, and energy sectors. The top manufacturing sectors (comprising 2/3 of all manufacturing employment in the region) are Rubber and Plastics, Transportation Equipment (including aerospace and boats, as well as car parts), Fabricated Metal, Food, and Machinery.¹⁷

¹⁶ Economic Modeling Statistics, Inc. (EMSI), 2016

¹⁷ EMSI, 2016

In addition to the overall positive growth in the industry, specific occupations are projected to grow at a higher than average rate. These include the following:

Occupations	2015 Jobs	2025 Jobs	Numeric Change	% Change
Engineers, various	694	721	27	3.9%
Computer-Numeric Controlled Machine Tool programmers	222	273	51	23%
Computer Controlled Machine Tool Operators	63	78	15	24%
Machinists	775	895	120	15%

Despite these positive trends and significant impact on the economy, the unemployment rate for the manufacturing industry in the region is a staggering 13%.¹⁸ This indicates a significant skills gap, and/or an unwillingness on the part of former manufacturing workers to return to the industry.

Agriculture

Most farms in Northwest Michigan are operated as small family farms that face additional economic pressure as the size and scale of farming operations continue to increase. To remain competitive in the face of financial pressures created by statewide, national, and global food policy, many small farms are diversifying, looking for new markets, or adding value to their products through on-site processing. Although Northwest Michigan is still the “Cherry Capital,” there is a growth of startup agriculture businesses in distilleries, hops, raw juices, cheese, jams, and more. However, the skill sets needed for managing this business growth are lacking among the farm owners and managers. Additionally, farm and value added processing equipment is increasingly high tech, requiring specialized skills to operate.

Agriculture is a growing industry in Northwest Michigan, which includes crop and animal production, as well as timber operations. There is also a large sector of food and animal processing micro-businesses that are considered manufacturers, but which are symbiotically to the growth in agriculture, as those businesses rely on regionally-grown products and provide revenue and jobs for farmers.

Industry	2015 Jobs	2025 Jobs	Numeric Change	% Change
11 Crop and Animal Production ¹⁹	1,662	2,169	507	31%

In the past decade, the agriculture sector in Northwest Michigan has grown more than 33%, while the nation’s ag sector grew less than 6% and the state’s grew 17%. That makes up more than 1,500 jobs in the region. The number of jobs in animal production doubled over that time period (up to 430, and with that, an eight-fold growth in meat processing jobs). Crop production also grew by 150 jobs. This huge

¹⁸ EMSI, 2016

¹⁹ EMSI, 2016

growth, which again does not include the also substantial growth in related food-processing micro-businesses, is projected to continue at a rate of 31% through 2025.²⁰

The industry is also experiencing shifts in its workforce. As significant numbers of farmers prepare to retire without passing farms on to heirs, new farmers face high start-up costs that create barriers to establishing themselves in agriculture. Without new farmers to replace those retiring, significant acreages of farmland and valuable skill sets are endangered.

Many farms in Northwest Michigan depend on a skilled migrant workforce. However, immigration-related issues are having impacts on farms and workers throughout the region. Farmers report difficulties in finding workers with the appropriate skills, which threatens their ability to grow labor-intensive crops.

Occupations	2015 Jobs	2025 Jobs	Numeric Change	% Change
Farmworkers and Laborers	679	898	219	32%
Farmers, Ranchers, and Agricultural Managers	115	149	34	30%

Automotive, Construction and Transportation

This sector is a blending of traditionally clustered industries, considering the connections and impacts that each has on the other. With a high school diploma/GED and short-term training or an apprenticeship, there are great opportunities to learn a trade and make excellent wages. Many of the occupations in these industries require similar skill sets, so there is also an opportunity to move between the sectors for additional career mobility.

Industry	2015 Jobs	2025 Jobs	Numeric Change	% Change
811 Repair and Maintenance	1,207	1,364	154	12.8%
23 Construction	5,984	6,211	227	4%
48 Transportation and Warehousing	1,710	1,971	261	15%

The region's construction industry was hit hard by the recession; many companies went out of business and the skilled workforce left the area. Now that the economy is recovering, we see a significant increase in construction projects, both commercial and residential, especially in the region's population center of Traverse City. However, construction companies are among the most desperate to find skilled workers, because of the high level of skills needed and the extremely fast growth of their projects.

Transportation of goods and materials is growing significantly with the improvement in the economy. This industry is especially important to Northern Michigan because of our geographic location: products made here that will be sold elsewhere must be transported by truck; some rail infrastructure exists but

²⁰ EMSI, 2015

is not nearly sufficient to be a primary transportation medium. This has caused substantial demand for over the road truck drivers.

Occupations	2015 Jobs	2025 Jobs	Numeric Change	% Change
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	673	792	119	8.3%
Construction Laborers	794	855	61	8%
Automotive Service Technicians	270	286	16	6%
Roofers	178	217	39	22%
Electricians	239	277	38	16%

Healthcare

This sector appears to be the industry a high volume of need and far too few skilled workers. Job postings on Pure Michigan Talent Connect show healthcare as the second highest number of open positions next to Hospitality (see the Supply and Demand Comparison table on page 14). The Healthcare industry also offers a wide variety of jobs, from entry level to highly specialized. Career pathways in this sector are promising, as skill sets transfer from one occupation to another, with multiple stepping stones available.

Industry	2015 Jobs	2025 Jobs	Numeric Change	% Change
621 Ambulatory Health Care Services	6,574	8,573	1,999	30%
622 Hospitals	6,278	6,933	655	10%
623 Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	2,342	2,986	644	27%

Home Health is a subset of the industry that faces particular complications in recruiting for open positions. Home Health Aides are entry-level workers, and there is no standard training or credential for the occupation. However, these workers are expected to perform at a higher level than their classification would indicate; they must perform their duties in an unsupervised setting, in the home of patients. This situation calls for the ability to think on your feet and make judgement calls on the spot, maintaining appropriate boundaries, and high levels of professionalism. In our geographically vast region, workers often must travel great distances to get to their worksites, requiring travel reimbursement costs. Because home health services are often funded by Medicare, companies are limited in the pay scale they can offer due to the regulatory cap on reimbursements. All of these factors present barriers and higher levels of complexity for home health agencies' attempts to recruit qualified workers.

Certified Nurse Aide is another difficult position to fill, although it offers a standard training and industry-recognized credential. Also, the location of the work is typically fixed, such as at a hospital or nursing home. This provides some stability for the workers. Unfortunately, entry into the position usually begins with on-call/part-time status, no guarantees of regular hours, and is usually the night

shift. Although most companies recruit heavily by emphasizing the flexibility of the position, career pathways opportunities, and paid training, job seekers are reluctant to begin a new career if they are unsure they will be able to support their families once they start working. This again makes for difficulties in recruitment.

The current need for registered nurses continues to grow and is projected to increase by 16% in the next 10 years. The job postings we see in our region often include specializations, such as operating room, neonatal, and cardiac. So there is need not only for more graduates of RN programs, but also additional training in these specialized skill sets.

Occupation	2015 Jobs	2025 Jobs	Numeric Change	% Change
Registered Nurses	2286	2658	372	16%
Nursing Assistants	1390	1601	211	15%
Medical Assistants	831	982	151	18%
Home Health Aides	585	802	217	37%
Personal Care Aides	555	757	202	36%

Hospitality

The Northwest region is well-known for its hospitality and tourism economy. Cities such as Petoskey, Traverse City, and Manistee attract hundreds of thousands of visitors per year, especially in the summer. Smaller towns and villages offer year round recreational options, such as hunting and fishing, snowmobiling, and scenic trails.

Accommodation and Food Services is ranked 4th in size among all industries in the region, 3rd in growth rate, and 2nd in location quotient. The Retail industry is 3rd in size, 5th in growth rate, and 5th in location quotient.²¹ Together, they have one of the highest impacts on the region's economy.

Industry	2015 Jobs	2025 Jobs	Numeric Change	% Change
44 Retail	16,193	16,895	702	4%
72 Accommodation and Food Services	15,792	16,974	1,155	7%

Hospitality employs over 32,000 individuals in the region in retail, food service, accommodations, and recreation businesses. Most of the jobs are in food service and retail, and these jobs are expected to grow significantly, adding more than 900 new jobs across the 10-county region through 2025.

Currently, hospitality employers are desperate for workers. According to Pure Michigan Talent Connect, job seekers with hospitality-related would currently only meet 46% of the need represented by job postings (see the Supply and Demand Comparison table on page 14).²² Although the jobs are numerous, they are typically seasonal and wages can be low compared to the cost of living.

²¹ EMSI, 2016

²² Pure Michigan Talent Connect, 2016

Occupation	2015 Jobs	2025 Jobs	Numeric Change	% Change
Food preparation and serving workers	1,974	2,286	312	16%
Cashiers	3,779	4,016	237	6%
Cooks	1,562	1,768	206	13%
Retails Salespersons	4,694	4,859	165	4%

Information and Business Services

This industry cluster is comprised of businesses that provide services to other businesses and to individuals, such as accounting, legal, information systems, communications, waste management and insurance. The sector employs almost 12,000 individuals with average earnings over \$50,000.²³ As the industries in this sector continue to grow, numerous job opportunities will be available, ranging from entry level with minimal training to a Bachelor's Degree or higher. The majority of jobs in this sector belong to professional office workers.

Industry	2015 Jobs	2025 Jobs	Numeric Change	% Change
52 Finance and Insurance	3,456	3,722	266	8%
54 Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	3,220	3,434	214	7%
56 Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	5,091	6,460	1,369	27%

Employers in the Information Technology industry are especially concerned about the lack of trained software developers and other computer programmers. The “brain drain” appears to be a significant contributing factor to this issue, because traditional college students leave the area and do not return upon completion of their education. In addition, completions at postsecondary institutions in the region are low, partly because the need is so high that students are recruited before finishing their degree.

Occupation	2015 Jobs	2025 Jobs	Numeric Change	% Change
Insurance Sales Agents	482	646	164	34%
Customer Service Representatives	592	665	73	12%
Software Developers	123	152	29	24%
Computer Programmers and Analysts	192	211	19	10%

²³ EMSI, 2016

Regional Workforce Development Activities

See the Workforce Development System section of the Local Plan for a description of local workforce development activities in the region, including available education and training opportunities. Unless otherwise indicated, the term “program staff” refers to frontline services providers for all four core WIOA titles.

The Northwest region is strong in the following areas:

Strength	Evidence
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Talent District Career Council (TDCC) • Multiple collaborative initiatives and activities, including TEC Scholarships, Just-in-Time Trainings, Career Fairs • Regional Prosperity Board • Sub-regional Retention Visits • Skilled Trades Training Fund grants in collaboration with multiple companies, New Jobs Training Program, Michigan Economic Development Corporation, and local economic development organizations • Collaborative development of the Regional Prosperity Plan
Employer Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer Forums • Just-in-Time Trainings • Retention Visits • Multiple successful hiring events • Business Services Team assigned to employer relationship management, all are Certified Business Solutions Professionals • Sector Initiatives • Strong economic development organizations
Performance	The region has always met or exceeded all WIA performance measures
Career and Technical Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant enrollments; 40% of students in the Wexford-Missaukee ISD • Waiting lists for numerous programs • Responsive to employer needs • Active in the Talent District Career Councils • Offer summer camps for middle school students
Training for Business and Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All postsecondary institutions offer customized training services for business customers • New Jobs Training Program is administered by a local community college with strong relationships across the system • Highly successful Skilled Trades Training Fund activities
Use of Data and Labor Market Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networks Northwest is known as the regional resource for data on in-demand industries and occupations • Hot Jobs Report and Framework for Talent in Northwest Michigan

The weaknesses of the region's response to employer needs are opportunities for improvement and growth. All stakeholders involved in providing workforce-related services are needed to assist in meeting these challenges. Many of the weaknesses identified here are addressed in the Regional Strategies as well as the Workforce Development Board's Strategic Vision.

- The community's lack of awareness about in-demand occupations and the skills needed to obtain them.
- Dwindling resources to support employment and training.
- Limited use of work-based learning programs, such as apprenticeships.
- Residual misperceptions about the public workforce system, although this has improved significantly in recent years (misperceptions include the belief that Michigan Works is the Unemployment office, that we only work with low-skilled individuals, and that job postings are only for entry-level positions).
- Training for soft skills is limited.
- Employers' are unaware of the "hidden" talent pool – individuals with disabilities.

The region's capacity to provide the workforce development activities necessary to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, is only limited by financial resources. All other necessary elements are in place, offering a system of services that support completion of programs, placement into positions, and job retention. Current financial resources of the workforce development system will not come close to meeting employers' current hiring needs, both in terms of recruitment assistance and training. However, financial assistance for training programs may be leveraged with other programs, such as the New Jobs Training Program, Skilled Trades Training Fund, financial aid, local scholarship programs, and more. Additional grant funding should be pursued from a variety of sources to support training needs.

Regional Strategies

The following were developed by the local board through the process described above.

Serving the Hardest to Serve

The "Hardest to Serve" have significant barriers to employment, such as housing, transportation, lack of marketable skills, low educational attainment, disabilities, soft skills, and more. WIOA law states that among eligible and interested individuals, priority must be given to the hardest to serve. Employers in the region have identified lack of employability (or "soft") skills as the most significant barrier.

Our strategy for addressing this issue is to create a new, or find an existing, short-term training program for soft skills. The program will be developed with employer input and delivery of the training sessions will involve employers to the greatest extent possible. Certification will only be obtained through proper demonstration of skills, so that the certificate has value to employers. In addition, Networks Northwest will expand its work-based learning programs to incorporate soft skills training wherever possible.

Employer Engagement

Employer needs should be identified and workforce programs should be developed to meet those needs. A local challenge has been that more and more organizations are starting to serve employers. This causes confusion, the appearance of duplication, and a burden on employers' time.

Our strategy for addressing this issue is to work collaboratively with other organizations who serve businesses to reduce duplication and confusion. Collaborative activities could include the following:

- Revitalize the Business Atlas and expand to ten counties. The Business Atlas was a product of a grant received by one of our community colleges via DLEG Regional Entrepreneurial Collaborative grant. Unfortunately, the collaborative group, location, and web site have not been maintain. Revitalizing it would involve inventorying both partners and resources, updating the web site, re-engaging the partners, and promoting its existence.
- Expand the Business Enhancement Team model to include other partners, identifying shared goals, and more.

Michigan Rehabilitation Services is embracing this component of WIOA by hiring business services consultants. The individual covering the Northwest region has already been identified and is well-connected with Michigan Works! staff. The Business Services Team at Michigan Works! will incorporate the MRS staff member into the team, and work collaboratively on a regular basis to ensure thorough communication, avoid duplicative contacts with a company, and better connect Title I, II and III services with Title IV. This partnership and integrative approach will raise awareness among employers about the availability of individuals with disabilities as a viable labor pool to fill open positions.

Career Pathways

Workforce programming should provide participants with the opportunity to improve their skills through various stepping stones of education and work experience. Some of the challenges related to career pathways include the following: There is no consistent, generally accepted definition of the term "Career Pathways;" following an individual through multiple stepping stones will necessitate a much longer time period of participation in our programs; every industry and occupation is different.

Our strategy for addressing this issue is for Networks Northwest to work collaboratively with local and state partners to build career pathways systems within high-demand sectors. Components of these systems will include the following:

- Thorough assessments
- Basic academic education
- Occupational training
- Work-based learning

Progression through each of the above will result in industry-recognized credentials and increase in job prospects and potential income.

The career pathways systems developed will give program staff, educators, employers, and participants a tool to use in mapping out career pathways on an individual basis. For the youth program, coordinate with the Intermediate School Districts' Education Development Plan project.

Increasing Awareness of In-demand Occupations

Throughout the entire process utilized to develop the Regional Prosperity Plan, as well as engagement with employers, partners, board members, and communities, Networks Northwest has heard a very clear message: the people of the region need to know which career options are available here. The Workforce Development Board's Strategic Agenda and the Regional Prosperity Plan identify increasing awareness of in-demand occupations as a priority strategy.

Our strategy for addressing this issue is multi-faceted, but ultimately involves marketing campaigns related to both specific occupations and to overall awareness that good jobs exist here.

Awareness of demand for specific occupations:

Our sector work has revealed that employers in some industries are not in need of training support from the workforce system. However, they need assistance in creatively marketing job opportunities that are traditionally not very appealing, and have a difficult time competing with the thousands of other jobs available. (One example of this is Home Health Aide – see the Sector Initiatives section of the Local Plan for more details.) Therefore, Networks Northwest will respond to these employers' needs by creating Career Awareness Campaigns for these positions.

We will continue to update and publish the Hot Jobs Report for our region, organized by in-demand industry sector. Upcoming versions will include identifiers for STEM occupations as well as both starting and median wages.

The WIOA Youth programs – both in-school and out-of-school – will concentrate on promoting in-demand careers. Youth program staff will participate in career expos, parent nights, and job fairs with career awareness information, including the Hot Jobs Report and other labor market information. In addition, youth staff will continue to coordinate Talent Tours for various industries.

We will utilize social media, especially the Career Café web presence, to promote specific Hot Jobs.

Awareness of career opportunities in the region:

We have forged a relationship with MyNorth Media as a project of the Regional Prosperity Initiative, to create a Live-Work-Play web site. This site, MyNorth.com, hosts a "Work Here" section that streams job postings from Pure Michigan Talent Connect, features stories about Cool Companies, and shows a map of local companies by industries. Networks Northwest will continue to build and strengthen this relationship, and look for more opportunities to promote the site as the ultimate recruitment and talent attraction tool.

Veterans Services

Veterans receive priority of service across all employment and training programs. They also have access to a Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist if they meet eligibility criteria. However, it is the intention of this region to go above and beyond to assist America's Veterans with accessing services. One challenge to providing services to veterans is that very few of them come to the service center. In 2015, only 7% of Wagner-Peyser applicants were veterans or eligible spouses.

Our strategy to address this issue is to conduct outreach and make the community aware of services to veterans. We will strengthen our relationships with local and state Veterans service organizations. We will make the resource rooms more inviting to Veterans by dedicating specific sections and/or

computers to use by Veterans. We will better promote the CareerCafe.org/Vets web site, offer technology-enabled assistance for those who cannot come to the center, and host events such as Veterans Job Fairs and Veterans Employment Bootcamps.

Apprenticeship

US DOL Registered Apprenticeship offers an “earn and learn” option to job seekers, allowing them to earn a wage while learning on the job. It offers employers the opportunity to develop their own pipeline of skilled talent. We feel this is a fitting strategy for employers who are looking ahead and very concerned about the impact of coming retirements in their workforce.

One challenge to implementing apprenticeships is employer reluctance to complete the paperwork, due to their perceptions of the time involved. Therefore, we will offer our position as US DOL Registered Apprenticeship sponsor to employers who are unable to develop their own apprenticeships. Our staff will work with the company and the training provider to create the apprenticeship training plan, submit paperwork to the US DOL, enroll apprentices, and assist with other details. This service will be targeted toward small companies whose capacity to create the systems and develop programming is limited.

Sector Initiatives

Sector-based initiatives can vary from fully formed councils, with governance structure, staff support, and strategic plans, to as-needed, pop-up activities. The Northwest region’s utilization of sector initiatives varies and has evolved over time, but leans more toward a less-structured, demand-driven response to employer needs. However, the program development, planning, and delivery of workforce development services is organized around the framework of industry clusters.

Networks Northwest was an early adopter for the sector approach. We created and maintained several Regional Skills Alliances, including Healthcare, Agriculture, Entrepreneurship, Hospitality, and Advanced Manufacturing. These alliances provided a network for employers in each specific industry, worked with educational partners to develop new training programs that met employers’ needs, and offered training funds to create a skilled workforce. Our success with these alliances was so profound, we incorporated this approach into everything we do. We now align all efforts around the region’s in-demand industry sectors. Here are a few examples of how we have changed our way of doing business:

- All training, including employer-based (OJTs, Incumbent Worker, Customized), must fall into one of the 6 in-demand industry sectors;
- A portion of classroom training funds are dedicated to specific industry sectors with the most need;
- Issue a Hot Jobs Report, which identifies in-demand occupations within the six in-demand industry sectors;
- Ensure that every in-demand sector is represented on the board;
- Regularly convene Employer Forums by industry sector to gather input from employers and support their workforce development needs.

In the last five years, we have seen industry-based groups form or revitalize with employers at the lead, due to the recognition that working collaboratively helps everyone. Northwest Michigan Works! staff take active roles with these industry associations, and will continue to work collaboratively to ensure alignment with the needs of each sector.

Strategies for continuing and building upon our use of the sector approach incorporate many of the Michigan Industry Cluster Alliance tenets. We plan to implement the following strategies:

- Help employers to access, better understand and use local Labor Market Information;
- Create a regional, talent development strategic plan for each industry sector;
- Facilitate closer connections between employers and educators for the purpose of updating curriculum;
- Provide a mechanism for regional career awareness campaigns by industry;
- Increase training of specific occupations most in-demand for specific industry sectors;
- Improve our system's understanding of the overall needs of the industry, in addition to talent needs.

Use of the strategies listed above will vary by industry, and will depend on factors related to projected growth of occupations within the sector, earnings potential for job seekers, and long-term employment options. It is anticipated that training, while available via ITAs based on customer choice, will be targeted towards the four industry sectors with the highest earning and long-term employment potentials: Advanced Manufacturing; Automotive, Construction and Transportation; Healthcare; and Information and Business Services. Support for occupations that are affected by seasonality and are lower in wage will focus on marketing those careers on a regional basis.

See the Engaging Employers through Sector Initiatives section of the Local Plan for specific activities occurring in the Northwest.

Coordination of Supportive Services

Supportive Services are essential to the success of the workforce development system's customers. Ensuring that these services are available and readily accessible is critical to implementation of regional strategies. Among the many possible supportive services, the three most in need, especially for the hardest to serve populations, are Transportation, Housing, and Child care.

Networks Northwest is home to the local Regional Planning Organization (RPO). This department specializes in taking regional approaches, and working with local governments and communities to develop efficient, connected plans and services. The RPO is the designated entity for regional transportation solutions, and acts as a liaison to the Michigan Department of Transportation as well as local transit providers. We also act as a regional data and policy resource regarding housing issues. We convene networks on transportation and housing, which focus on regional collaboration and solutions.

Both networks consist of provider agencies – transit and housing – as well as other interested parties. The networks offer opportunities for enhanced communication, visioning sessions, and joint activities. They host summits, promote public comment sessions, coordinate trainings on policy implications, and

facilitate public awareness about transportation and housing challenges and potential solutions. Both networks were very involved in developing the [Regional Prosperity Plan](#).

The transportation network is very aware of the transportation challenges inherent in the region and the impact on the workforce. Therefore, their activities in the next two years will be more connected to the workforce development system than ever. Their current chair is Executive Director of the Disability Network, a service provider of WIOA Title IV services. Through his leadership, the network recognizes the necessity of transportation options for people with barriers to employment, including those with disabilities, in order to successfully participate in the workforce. One activity on the network's agenda is to develop a commuter guide for both workers and employers. Resources included in the guide will help workers to access available transportation systems, and will help employers who wish to assist their workers with transportation supports and incentives. The guide will feature local and national examples and case studies, as well as resources and contact information. This document will be available online and in print, and will be promoted by the Northwest Michigan Works! Business Services team. This will be another tool in the toolbox when engaging with employers on holistic workforce solutions.

Networks Northwest also convenes a Housing Solutions Network, and supports their work with information and analysis related to housing needs. The [Framework for Housing in Northwest Michigan](#) report shows current and projected demand for all types of housing. Ancillary to this report are [housing inventories](#) by county and a [Housing Target Market Analysis](#) for each county, both of which have been cited as the reason that developers and communities are responding to the desperate need for housing options. High costs of housing in our rural, tourism-oriented area have undermined employers' attempts to recruit professionals from other areas. Housing that provides handicap-accessible entry and living areas is a barrier to employment for people with disabilities. Lack of available, affordable rentals as well as home sales force people with lower incomes to live farther away, compounding the issue of transportation.

In order to discuss and strategies on these issues, the Housing Solutions Network hosted a [Housing Summit](#) in 2015, which featured multiple speakers and breakout sessions, and provided a forum for stakeholders to learn more about the challenges of residents who are unable to access affordable housing. At this summit, Networks Northwest presented a new report for employers, [Growing Business with Workforce Housing](#). The report is a resource guide for employers who recognize that housing is a significant barrier to employment for people from all walks of life. The guide includes examples and case studies both local and national. It provides strategies that range from very small and inexpensive, to large scale investments in workforce housing support. This guide has been distributed and promoted throughout the region, via the Northwest Michigan Works! Business Liaisons and in collaboration with local economic development organizations.

Additionally, the Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency (NMCAA), an active member of the Housing Solutions Network, serves as the region's HARA. The workforce development system will continue to work closely with NMCAA in order to ensure that homeless customers are connected to the support they need.

Childcare programs are coordinated in the region through the Great Start Collaborative. There are three offices of the collaborative that together cover the ten counties of Region 2. Two of these offices are housed in local economic development organizations – in Traverse City and Cadillac – indicating the community's recognition that early childhood development is critical to the success of the long-term

workforce and economic vitality. The mission of the collaborative is to ensure that every child in Michigan has a great start in life and an equal opportunity to achieve their highest potential. Each group in the region has an extensive list of members, all of whom are invested in supporting childcare programs and increasing quality of both home and center-based programs. However, much work remains to be done. As of 2014, there were 473 licensed childcare providers in the Great Start database. Of those, only 181 took children with special needs, and only 40 offered 2nd shift hours.²⁴ In a region where hospitality jobs are so prevalent, 2nd shift hours are very much in need. Additional coordination of this supportive service is provided by the Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency, which serves as the region's Head Start provider and coordinator.

Coordination with Economic Development

Northwest Michigan embraces the belief that Talent Development *is* Economic Development, and vice-versa. The two are inextricably linked, and rely on each other to cultivate and sustain vibrant communities. For this reason, Networks Northwest has always connected with local economic development agencies and worked collaboratively on individual projects, as well as for the greater good of the region.

Collaborative Development Council

The system is a regular participant in the local Collaborative Development Council, a regional convening of state and local economic development entities. Our participation occurs both at the leadership and frontline levels. The leadership group discusses regional strategies for workforce and economic development, prioritizes local delivery options and special initiatives, and collectively connects with local businesses. On the frontline, Northwest Michigan Works Business Liaisons participate in Retention Visits. These visits to local companies put us in touch with the CEO and upper management, and we learn the company's pain points and growth opportunities. Together with MEDC and the local economic development organization, we can bring resources to the company that will assist in their growth planning. In addition, these visits give us the opportunity to intervene if downsizing is on the horizon. (see Rapid Response section in the Local Plan)

Regional Prosperity Board

The Regional Prosperity Board is the first of its kind in Michigan. Following Governor Snyder's Regional Prosperity Initiative, the governing board for the Networks Northwest organization consists of both the workforce development board, the local elected officials board, and representation from multiple sectors that characterize the region. Formerly named Northwest Michigan Council of Governments, the organization marked the creation of this new board by changing its name to reflect network-oriented approach to Talent, Business, and Community development.

The Regional Prosperity Board exists for the purpose of advancing the economic prosperity of the region. In order to ensure alignment with local economic development activities, a representative from a local economic development organization is a member of the board. In addition, representation includes chambers of commerce, local governments such as villages and townships, transportation

²⁴ Great Start Connect, 2014

infrastructure, energy providers, and real estate. All of these entities have a direct or supporting role in economic development.

Performance Measures – Regional Negotiation

The Northwest region is a single local area under WIOA designation, and therefore negotiation regarding performance measures on a regional, multi-area basis is not applicable.

II. Workforce Innovation & Opportunities

Act Local Plan

Northwest Region

Program Years 2016 - 2020

Labor Market Data and Economic Conditions

All information presented in the Regional Analysis section of the Regional Plan is incorporated into the Local Plan.

Strategic Vision

The local board developed its “Strategic Agenda” for the time period 2013 – 2020 as a result of three key events. These events built upon each other to incorporate input from multiple partners and with perspectives from the statewide, regional, and sub-regional levels.

1. **Workforce Development Board Retreat, September 2012:** the board met to develop identify strengths and opportunities in the workforce development system now and in the future. They also brainstormed strategic approaches for solutions to challenges.
2. **Governor’s Economic Summit, March 2013:** several board members and multiple additional employers attended the inaugural economic summit convened by Governor Snyder. At this event, the region’s representatives heard about statewide initiatives, learned from other regions, and determined priorities.
3. **Northwest Michigan Regional Talent Summit, May 2013:** the board convened a summit for the region, as a follow-on from the Governor’s statewide summit. The region’s version looked at challenges to talent development, and chose priorities to focus on for the remainder of the decade.

The result of these collaborative events was the region’s Strategic Agenda. In summary, the overriding imperative, or “vision statement,” is:

Attract, develop, and retain TALENT as a key economic driver for economic prosperity in Northwest Michigan.

The full Strategic Agenda is included as Appendix B.

The specific goals and strategies that relate most closely to preparing an educated and skilled workforce are listed here:

Goal 1: Increase occupational exposure and education at the high school and post-secondary levels, in ways that meet multiple learning styles, expose learners to real world jobs, and respond to employers’ skill needs now and over the coming decade.

Strategy A: Increase work-based learning opportunities including internships, co-op, job shadowing, and apprenticeships.

Strategy B: Provide teachers with summer fellowships at local employers so they can contextualize subject matter to occupations.

Strategy C: Increase student/parent/teacher career days and tours of businesses (Talent Tours).

Strategy D: Utilize media networks/avenues for marketing career opportunities to students, parents and other adults.

Goal 2: Improve the foundational skills of both the current and future work force.

Strategy A: Connect Education Development Plans to career goals.

Strategy B: Develop and deliver a refresher course for foundational skills for adults.

Both goals are primarily focused on youth in the region. However, many of these strategies can be beneficial to unemployed adults, including those with multiple barriers to employment and those with disabilities.

It is important to note that the many goals and possible strategies identified in this document are only achievable through collaborative efforts. Networks Northwest is not capable nor appropriate to carry out every activity necessary to attain the vision. Multiple partners, many of whom are represented on the new Regional Prosperity Board, are responsible for working together to accomplish the goals set forth.

During the process for creating the WIOA Plan, the board looked anew at the Strategic Agenda and created a list of activities that have occurred since its creation. The list of activities is included as Appendix C. This list reveals that some of the goals and objectives in the agenda are either complete or are in need of updating. Therefore, the board intends to update the Strategic Agenda during the coming year.

Alignment of Local Resources and across Core Programs

Three of the four core WIOA programs are already very well-aligned in the region. Networks Northwest is the umbrella agency for Titles I, II, and III. Title II is delivered in partnership with the Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District.

Title IV of WIOA is delivered by the state agency Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS), under the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The regional office is located in Traverse City, which is also the location of the Networks Northwest administrative office and the primary American Job Center (AJC). Although MRS is not co-located in the AJC, they once were, and relationships among frontline staff have been nurtured and maintained. MRS staff are welcome to use the AJC on an intermittent basis. Although no office space is dedicated, the counselors spend time in the resource room on a regular basis, discussing services with walk-ins and referrals. In Manistee, the AJC is co-located with DHHS, making connections and cross-referrals with MRS more readily available.

Development and use of Career Pathways is one strategy that the board will lead in order to better align all core programs and local resources, including educational partners and employers. Career Pathways will provide customers with a plan for long-term success, with milestones and increased earning potential along the way. Apprenticeships are one approach for implementing Career Pathways, beginning with pre-apprenticeships that can include remedial training in the Adult Education program, and continue to the combination of classroom and work-based learning in one of the other titles.

Another strategy for alignment across core programs is to provide a framework for understanding performance measures and their impact on all titles. Prior to the implementation of WIOA, we developed a matrix titled “CPR,” which stands for Completion, Placement, Retention. All measurements across all programs fall into one of the CPR categories. The matrix will be updated, with input from all programs, to reflect new WIOA performance measures and to include not only the core programs but others under the Networks Northwest umbrella. The current matrix is included as Appendix D. Once it is updated, the matrix will be turned into a whiteboard and posted in each AJC. The whiteboard will be updated with monthly and quarterly performance outcomes. This visual display will help frontline staff, as well as management and administration, see clearly and collectively the achievements and progress of the entire system towards performance benchmarks.

Networks Northwest administration will facilitate greater and stronger connections across all programs. This strategy begins with purposeful inclusion – making sure that all programs are included in planning, program management, and service activities. This can be as simple as bringing representation from each of the four core programs together for planning a career fair, and as complex as creating committees to address significant concerns in the delivery of services. It will also be implemented via a Career Pathways committee, which will involve multiple partners across the four core programs and more.

Workforce Development System

Workforce Development activities in Northwestern Michigan are strong, varied, and collaborative. Multiple partners work together to deliver employment and training services to employers and individuals from all walks of life.

The public workforce development system consists of services provided through Northwest Michigan Works! as well as the Workforce Development Agency – State of Michigan, and Michigan Rehabilitation Services (DHHS). Priority of service is given to veterans who are customers of all employment and training services. In addition, individuals with disabilities are provided with reasonable accommodations in order to fully participate in services.

Programs

Programs offered via the workforce development system include the four core programs, and several more.

- Wagner-Peyser Employment Services (WIOA Title III)
 - Trade Adjustment Act and all iterations
 - Veterans Employment and Training
 - Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker
 - Labor Exchange through Pure Michigan Talent Connect

- Reemployment Services
- Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth (WIOA Title I)
 - National Dislocated Worker Grants
 - Rapid Response
- Adult Education (WIOA Title II and state of Michigan Adult Education)
- Vocational Rehabilitation (WIOA Title IV)
- Partnership. Accountability. Training. Hope. (PATH)
- Food Assistance Employment and Training (FAE&T)
- Jobs for Michigan's Graduates
- Prisoner Reentry

The services provided via these programs are listed below.

Self-Directed Services

Customers, including individuals with disabilities and other barriers, may access a variety of resources using the resource room in any of five American Job Centers in the region. Computers are available for the general public to use for job search purposes. The internet browser on these computers opens to two tabs: Pure Michigan Talent Connect, and CareerCafe.org. Both web sites provide self-directed job search assistance and multiple resources for anyone who wishes to use them.

In the American Job Centers, staff members are available to help customers with general job search services. These staff-facilitated services are recorded in the One-Stop Management Information System as Wagner-Peyser services. Services may include helping someone complete a job application, reviewing resumes, helping a customer load resume paper into the printer, looking through job opportunities with the customer and providing guidance on which best matches his/her skill set, and many more. Reasonable accommodations are provided as needed to individuals with disabilities.

On CareerCafe.org, customers can access our services from home or another location, such as a library. This is especially helpful in our large, rural region, where public transit can be quite limited. We have partnerships with libraries in 4 of the 5 counties where we do not have an American Job Center. Each of these libraries has a "kiosk," a computer dedicated to Michigan Works! job search. The Career Café web site is specially designed for these kiosk locations, giving customers easy access to multiple job search resources. The resources are presented in a "menu" of services: Get Ready, Career Target, Education & Training, Resume and Cover Letter, Career Search, Networking, Interviewing, Veterans, Career Enhancement, and Hot Jobs. The menu is organized in a continuum of job search phases; the customer can select the services needed at any point in his/her job search process.

Career Services

Career Services are intended to support a job seeker at a more intensive level than those provided through Employment Services. These services are available in two categories, based on the level of staff assistance.

Basic Career Services require minimal intervention by the staff member and usually do not necessitate an appointment. These can include the following:

- Initial assessment
- Labor market information
- Job postings and information about vacancies
- Information on in-demand occupations
- Community resources directories
- Walk-in assistance in job search and completion of job applications
- Information on unemployment insurance and public assistance
- Use of the resource room

Individualized Career Services are provided one-on-one by trained Career Facilitators and Advisors. These can include:

- Assistance with all aspects of job search, such as resume writing, interviewing, and networking;
- Career assessments and job search preparation;
- Case management for eligible individuals, to assist in removing barriers and accessing community resources;
- Development of an Individual Employment Plan for Adults, Individual Service Strategy for Youth;
- Job readiness services;
- Group career counseling as well as individualized;
- Specialized assistance for dislocated workers, through Rapid Response for companies who are downsizing or closing;
- Work experience opportunities for a variety of eligible individuals who need a transitional phase to long-term, self-sufficient employment.

Veterans Services

The career services listed above are available to veterans at any time, and are provided via priority of service. However, additional and specialized assistance for veterans with significant barriers to employment are also available. Barriers may include disabilities, homelessness, lacking GED, low-income, and more. This assistance is intensive case management and employment preparation, referrals to community resources, and connections to veterans assistance programs that will assist the veteran in becoming job ready. Services are delivered by veterans employed by the Workforce Development Agency – State of Michigan (WDA).

Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling

MRS offers employment counseling to assist individuals with disabilities. Trained counselors come from different backgrounds, and have education and training in career counseling, vocational evaluation, job placement, community resources, and many other areas related to employment.

Vocational Rehabilitation is a process. Potential customers attend an orientation in order to be fully informed and learn about the program. The counselor works in partnership with the customer to take steps toward long-term employment. A central value of MRS is “informed choice.” This means that the customer actively participates through the entire rehabilitation process. Together, the counselor and customer gather the information necessary to make the best choices. The information gathered includes

evaluation of the customer's strengths, resources, priorities, abilities, interests, and rehabilitation needs.

To begin the process, the individual completes an application, with accommodations provided if necessary. Based on the application, an MRS counselor determines eligibility. Eligibility criteria require that the individual:

- Has an existing physical or mental impairment;
- Experiences vocational or work-related barriers because of the disability;
- Needs assistance from vocational rehabilitation; and
- Can benefit from vocational rehabilitation services that will lead to employment.

Services may be provided based on priority groups, depending upon resource availability.

Upon determination of eligibility and priority group, a vocational evaluation is conducted. This allows the counselor and customer to explore job options, the local job market, different working conditions, and the impact of the disability on potential employment. The result of the evaluation is to set a career goal and jointly develop an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE).

All services deemed necessary will be included in the IPE. These may include:

- Vocational guidance and counseling;
- Job search, placement assistance and job-keeping services;
- Referral to other agencies for needed services;
- Accommodation services such as interpreter, notetaker, captioned telephone, frequency modulation system, etc.;
- Job licenses, tools, equipment and initial supplies;
- Rehabilitation and/or assistive technology services;
- Training, either on-the-job or in school
- Hearing aids, artificial limbs, braces and other health services;
- Specific post-employment services needed to maintain and/or regain employment.

When the customer is ready to seek employment, services will also include cover letter and resume writing assistance, interviewing skills, handling tough questions about his/her disability, job coaching, and more.

Training Services

Training Services are available to individuals who need skill upgrading or development in order to obtain gainful employment. These services include:

- Work-based training, such as On-the-Job Training, Apprenticeships, Customized Training developed by employers, and Incumbent Worker Training;
- Classroom training for eligible individuals in short-term, occupational training programs, available through an Individual Training Account voucher-based system.

Northwest Michigan Works! also partners with Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District to deliver Adult Education services, including:

- Preparation classes for the GED;
- High school classes in order to obtain a diploma;
- English Language Learner (formerly known as English as a Second Language) classes;
- Adult Basic Education for improving basic math, reading, and writing skills;
- Digital literacy classes;
- Citizenship programs.

Adult Education services are open entry, open exit, so individuals may enter the program at any time and do not have to wait for a schedule of classes. Learning is individualized based on a diagnostic assessment, so students focus on the content they need to learn and do not spend time learning things they already know. This allows them to complete the program quickly and continue on to postsecondary training or employment.

Postsecondary training is available through four primary educational institutions in the region: North Central Michigan College, Northwestern Michigan College, Baker College of Cadillac, and West Shore Community College. Among these institutions, training programs that cover each of the six in-demand industry sectors are available.

Additional occupational training is provided through a handful of private vendors, some online and some located in the region. These include, but are not limited to, New Horizons (computer training), Intuit (online Quickbooks training), Pinnacle Truck Driving School, Road Warrior Truck Driving School, Agape Healthcare (C.N.A.), Grandvue Medical Facility (C.N.A.), and more.

Youth Services

Youth Services are offered by Northwest Michigan Works! using the Jobs for Michigan's Graduates model for in-school youth, and via case management services to out-of-school youth. Both subdivisions of youth programming include the following:

- Services to youth that include employability skills training, work experience, training options, and access to a network of service providers that offer mentoring, financial literacy, study skills, entrepreneurship, leadership development, substance abuse prevention, high school drop-out prevention, credit recovery, and more;
- Talent Tours;
- Strong partnerships with career tech centers, Adult Education, postsecondary institutions, and employers.

MRS offers services to youth transitioning out of secondary school. WIOA requires that 15% of a region's allocation focus on this population. All of the services listed above are available to mutual clients of Northwest Michigan Works! and MRS. In addition, MRS provides intensive case management, assistive technology, and specialized vocational rehabilitation counseling. MRS intends to hire a Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) counselor to provide these services in the Northwest region.

Business Services

Business Services lead the system in identifying employer needs and therefore informing the design and development of all other programs. These services include:

- Help for businesses with customized approaches to recruitment and training, sector-based initiatives, region-wide job fairs, and career awareness campaigns;
- Business development assistance through connections to a network of business support systems and services such as the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, local economic development entities, Small Business Development Center, Procurement Technical Assistance Center, Global Trade Alliance, Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center, local educational institutions, industry associations, and many more;
- Access to incentives through a variety of sources, such as fidelity bonding for hiring at-risk populations, training grants for new and existing workers such as the Skilled Trades Training Fund, layoff aversion strategies such as the WorkShare program from Unemployment Insurance Agency, and many more;
- Connection to a hidden talent pool of disabled individuals, with supports and training funds to assist in qualifying them for available positions.

Local Coordination

The programs above are provided in an integrated, holistic manner, offering a seamless experience to the customer. In order to truly integrate at an efficient level, the local board has decided to deliver Title I and Title III programs through its workforce development arm, Northwest Michigan Works!, Inc. This in-house program delivery provides for less administrative overhead, allowing more funds to be directed toward program. In addition, the direct delivery of programs provides for higher quality assurance, and tighter alignment. This prevents the dilution of services due to potential competing visions and strategies at contracted organizations.

For programs that are delivered outside the realm of the workforce system's administrative agency, partnerships and relationships are critical to ensuring alignment and effective program delivery. Partnerships with Title II and IV providers are strong, and will be maintained and strengthened through the alignment of WIOA services and performance measures. Relationships with required WIOA partners are also well established, and will be strengthened by further communication regarding WIOA programming, priorities, and activities. In order to facilitate the strengthening of those relationships, the board has adopted two primary strategies.

1. *Use the Talent District Career Council (TDCC) to ensure that the workforce system is engaged with the education system.* The TDCC includes representation from all intermediate school districts and their career and technical education programs, as well as from all postsecondary institutions in the region. The required partners for Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act are leaders in the council; the Chair is the Associate Superintendent from Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District. These regular meetings ensure ongoing conversations, planning, and strategic activities that respond to the needs of education as well as employers.
2. *Take the lead in the region for talent development activities and knowledge of workforce issues.* Positioning Networks Northwest as the go-to resource for services, data, and local intelligence on both job seeker and employer needs will ensure that we are at the table for ongoing conversations regarding talent.

Access to Services

Access to employment, training, education, and supportive services is a challenge in rural areas, especially for individuals with disabilities and other barriers. While both Traverse City and Cadillac have comprehensive job centers, we are looking for strategies to reach out in more and better ways in our eight other counties. Affiliate job centers are available in Kalkaska, Petoskey, and Manistee. Access to all four core programs is available through all five centers. However, the affiliate centers are open part-time hours. The location of the center in Petoskey is not ideal to serve the entire county or surrounding areas, primarily because of the geographic landscape; several inland lakes make travel to the center a difficulty. Travel to access our services is a significant barrier for many residents of the region.

The board's strategy for expanding access is to bring services to small, rural communities through workshops, events, and technology.

- Currently, the system provides workshops at locations outside of the regular job center locations. Called Career Connections, these workshops are unique in that they not only offer a learning opportunity for customers to improve their job search, but also networking time with Career Services staff, Business Liaisons, and other job seekers. Career Connections are held on a regular schedule at area libraries, chambers of commerce, governmental centers, and other community partners. Promotion of the workshops is conducted by both the system and by the hosting partner. Our goal is to increase the number of Career Connections throughout the region, and provide them in more locations.
- Hiring and Career Events are held throughout the region in partnership with educational institutions, chambers, and other community based organizations. These events allow employers and job seekers to connect for hiring opportunities as well as for career exploration. Career Services staff are always on hand to provide services to job seekers in attendance, and make relevant connections. Our goal is to serve as the official hub for all hiring events throughout the region; we will publish a calendar on our website, and offer to partner with any entity seeking to coordinate an event aimed at jobseekers.
- Career Services are available virtually through the CareerCafe.org web site and email address. Career Services staff are equipped to conduct counseling sessions through Skype and/or telephone, review resumes through email, and coordinate online interviews with employers. In addition, our social media presence has significant following and we promote hot jobs, events, and job search tips through this venue. Information about Vocational Rehabilitation services can be access online. The application for services, Customer Handbook, and virtual orientation are available on the [MRS web site](#).
- MRS Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors utilize public access points to meet with customers within reasonable travel distance from their residence. Public access points include the American Job Centers, public libraries, and schools. Through this strategy, MRS has a physical presence in every county of the region.

Long-term career planning is incorporated based on individual circumstances for all workforce customers. Specifically, the Northwest approaches career pathways in terms of empowering customers in any of the WIOA programs to envision educational and/or career advancement, instead of simply

focusing on short-term attainment. This is done by assisting the customer with obtaining the training and/or credentials necessary to achieve their identified goals. For example, the Adult Education program works with each student to identify career goals at the beginning of their participation, mapping out educational goals that build on their GED and transition them to post-secondary training.

Facilitating career pathways for customers is purposeful and strategic, encompassing coordination with program partners, which may include, but not limited to, co-enrollment in core programs. Adult career services, youth, MRS, and adult education staff currently co-enroll those participants for which it makes sense, based on their identified needs and goals. Co-enrollment is easily facilitated between staff across the region. Partnerships with local employers and educational institutions is also paramount in ensuring a career pathways system for all, as well as improving access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential.

Activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential involves engaging vital partners such as employers and educational institutions. A budding example of such a partnership is the Regional ISD Strategic Plan and Educational Development Plan (EDP) pilot project.

The Regional ISD Strategic Plan is the result of efforts on behalf of all three Northwest's ISDs. The plan aligns with the workforce development board's strategic agenda and includes emphasis on connecting students' EDP to career goals. The EDP project provides a framework for occupational exposure opportunities to be built into the curriculum during 5th, 8th, and 10th grades, allowing student, teacher, and counselors to create a meaningful EDP. The project will ensure that thorough career exploration is conducted in order to select an appropriate career goal. The EDP will be used as the foundation for aligning educational tracks and class selections with career goals.

Other deliberate activities that are aimed at improving access to postsecondary credentials include expanding access to the following.

- *Work-based Learning Scholarships.* Occupational training funds are committed to scholarships for low-skilled, eligible participants to attend short-term training programs that incorporate a work-based learning component. These are available via Individual Training Accounts.
- *On-the-Job Training (OJT).* Employers are offered OJT contracts as incentives to hire and train individuals who are lacking some of the necessary skills, and corresponding credential for the job.
- *Apprenticeships.* Northwest Michigan Works! can sponsor apprenticeships for any employer in any occupation, as well as manage the tracking and documentation requirements with the U.S. Department of Labor.
- *Just-in-Time trainings.* These intensive, short-term training programs teach students the foundational skills necessary for an in-demand occupation. It further prepares them for additional training and corresponding credentials, based on the company's needs. Examples include Industrial Sewing, CNC, and Construction Laborer.
- *Michigan Advanced Technician Training (MAT2).* MAT2 is a partnership between Baker College of Cadillac, MEDC, Wexford-Missaukee ISD, Northwest Michigan Works!, and local employers. The program trains and credentials individuals in Mechatronics, a cross-functional and broad-based specialty. Employers sponsor and hire participants, while graduates commit to working with that employer for a minimum time period.

- *Mobile Digital Fabrication Lab* ("Fab Lab"). This mobile training facility for digital manufacturing is a result of a partnership between North Central Michigan College, Northern Lakes Economic Alliance, employers, Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians, and local school districts. The Fab Lab travels to local companies and high schools to provide training and credentialing as needed.

Employer Engagement using Sector Initiatives

Networks Northwest facilitates engagement of employers, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors, in the development and continuous improvement of workforce development programs. This engagement ensures that employers are guiding the system, and that the system is delivering programs and services that ultimately meet their needs. The three core programs administered by Networks Northwest have been participating in these engagement activities, and benefitting from the guidance provided by employers. Employers also benefit by learning more about the programs. While some connection has been made with Michigan Rehabilitation Services, the enhanced focus on employer engagement by that title will call for stronger connections and more thorough integration with vocational rehabilitation.

Facilitation of employer engagement is primarily done with a sector-based approach. Activities conducted include Employer Forums, surveys, participation in industry associations and councils, employer panels, membership in collaborative networks, attendance at local networking events, and more. The overall strategy is to align local resources, required partners, and entities that carry out core programs with the intent of serving employers.

Sector initiatives are led by the workforce system, but involve participation and support from multiple agencies and employers. Activities are conducted in response to need expressed by employers. Current and ongoing activities are listed below.

Advanced Manufacturing

Four manufacturing councils exist throughout the region, and the Northwest Michigan Works! Business Services Team has relationships with all of them: Northern Industrial Association; Grand Traverse Area Manufacturing Council; Cadillac Area Manufacturing Association; and Manistee Manufacturers Council.

All of these councils are heavily focused on talent issues at this time. Therefore, most have focused their efforts on assisting membership with recruitment. The Grand Traverse Area Manufacturing Council has coordinated a large Talent Tour on Manufacturing Day for the last two years. Our connections to local middle schools have assisted in this initiative, and we assist by providing staff members as chaperones. The Northern Industrial Association has expressed interest in a labor exchange on their web site, so we are facilitating connections to Pure Michigan Talent Connect. Multiple other career awareness and recruitment activities occur throughout the year in relation to manufacturing companies and specifically, in partnership with these associations. Employer partners in these efforts include Clark Manufacturing, Skilled Manufacturing Inc., Kalkaska Screw Products, TranTek, ACAT Global, Avon Automotive, Cadillac Rubber, FIAMM, Rexair, TentCraft, Frankfort Manufacturing, and many more.

The workforce system supports training in Advanced Manufacturing in multiple ways. In addition to training individual customers who are interested in manufacturing, we coordinate Just-in-Time Trainings

in Basic Machine Operation as an on-ramp to CNC careers. We also promote manufacturing training programs, such as MAT2 and apprenticeships.

Education providers are especially challenged at this time when developing programs for manufacturing careers. They have experienced such low enrollments in the past that many have closed programs. It takes significant resources to develop a college program, and there is no indication that students will come if the program is built. Networks Northwest is responding to this challenge by assisting a local college with a survey of employers, an employer forum, and potential student surveys in the future to assist in justifying creation of new, modular, and robust manufacturing programs.

The Northwest Michigan Works! Business Services team works extensively with local manufacturers. Their needs are significant, the jobs can be challenging for recruitment, and skill needs are varied. In many cases, companies are willing to train on the job, especially for entry level positions, if a willing and motivated candidate can be found. The Adult Education Learning Labs are also extremely beneficial when a candidate has the aptitude for manufacturing but needs to upgrade his/her math skills in order to be successful. Some local manufacturers have embraced the opportunity to hire individuals with disabilities, but more can be done to connect other companies with MRS.

Our involvement with manufacturing companies can be described by the numbers of job postings and job fills. At the time of this writing, 11% of job postings and 23% of job fills for Program Year 2016 belonged to the Advanced Manufacturing industry sector.²⁵

Multiple work-based training opportunities are available to our Advanced Manufacturing employer customers, including Customized, Incumbent, and On-the-Job Training services, as needed and appropriate. This sector is targeted for development of our first career pathways system, incorporating all four WIOA titles and key manufacturing employers in the region.

Agriculture

The Northwest Michigan Ag & Food System Sector Alliance is one of the original Regional Skills Alliances. Its purpose and activities have changed significantly over time, as the needs of local stakeholders have changed. This sector's employment and training needs have been prioritized in this region to focus on business development assistance for small farmers. Farmers have embraced growth opportunities provided by local food movements, including farmers markets, farm-to-table restaurants, and farm-to-school programs. However, growth necessitates management of the business of farming and takes the farmer from the field to the office. There are also numerous small businesses that take a local farm product and add value through processing. These businesses include jams, hummus, hops, and many more. Many of these farms and value-added food companies need help with business planning, access to capital, identifying target markets, creating a viable pricing structure, and marketing. Assistance with these struggles is primarily delivered by the Northwest region of the Michigan Small Business Development Center. Additional partners provide funding support to these local businesses, and our relationships with them are critical to our continued support and involvement with the agriculture industry. These partners include the local economic development organizations, revolving loan funds

²⁵ Salesforce, Networks Northwest database

(VentureNorth in the Northwest region), Northern Initiatives, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, and more.

Multiple work-based training opportunities are available to Agriculture employer customers, including Customized, Incumbent, and On-the-Job Training services, as needed and appropriate. Additionally, apprenticeships offer a viable succession plan for farmers who are looking ahead to retirement.

Networks Northwest has also been involved in the local Food Innovation Hub. We served as the grant recipient for an MDARD Regional Food System grant and provided coordination for the local advisory group. This food hub is now operational, managed by a new nonprofit, and housing multiple small agriculturally-related food businesses. We maintain connections to the regional food system, and the growers, producers, and processors who comprise it. Employer partners in the Agriculture industry include The Redheads, 9 Bean Rows, Cherry Capital Foods, St Ambrose Cellars, Sleeping Bear Apiaries, Stormcloud Brewing, Northern Organics, Food for Thought, Graceland Fruit, and many more.

Additionally, the system's partnership with Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Program of the Workforce Development Agency assists in leveraging resources to support the agriculture industry. The Agriculture Employment Specialist covering the region is closely connected to the Ag Skills Alliance coordinator.

Automotive, Transportation and Construction

This varied but connected cluster of industries is especially in need of skilled workers. Employers' outcry for workforce system support has been significant, and we continue to focus on both training and recruitment services to provide assistance.

Sector-based efforts are coordinated with the local colleges and training providers. Northwestern Michigan College (NMC) is a key partner in supporting this sector. Together, we host a regional Auto & Diesel Career Fair in Traverse City in support of the Automotive industry. This major event is intended to provide both current job opportunities to job seekers, and also career exploration activity to those interested in training programs related to automotive and heavy equipment maintenance. The event is promoted heavily, housed at the college's technical division campus, includes heavy equipment tours and demonstrations, and features prizes and give-aways. However, attendance has decreased over time and any recruitment activity in the future will need to change in order to best serve the employers. Continued engagement with all partners and ongoing brainstorming will be critical to success. Employer partners include Elmer's, Bill Marsh Automotive, Fox Motors, Sears, Star Truck Rental, AIS Equipment, Redmond Automotive, and Marathon Automotive.

The Transportation industry is also experiencing significant labor shortages. The impact of this industry on multiple other sectors makes it a lynchpin in the region's economic vitality. In order to address the need, Networks Northwest will dedicate funds for Individual Training Accounts to support multiple truck-driver trainings; the number per year will be determined based on funding availability. We will also pursue Just-in-Time trainings as appropriate. Educational partners in this industry include Baker College of Cadillac, Pinnacle Truck Driving, and Road Warrior Trucking.

The construction industry's needs are significantly high as well. The recent rebound in development has put pressure on the industry to quickly ramp up. The lack of well-trained and capable workers has

impeded potential growth of the companies and the region. Networks Northwest partners with NMC who coordinates a career fair and expo event called Building Tomorrow. This event offers tours to local high school students for two full days, then opens to the community on a Saturday. Students are encouraged to return on Saturday with their parents, and are entered into a drawing for a scholarship if they did. Community members are also invited to attend. Following the most recent event, we offered a Just-in-Time Training in Basic Construction Laborer. Although enrollment was too low to hold the class, the employers were very supportive of the training and our sector based activities for this industry will continue to look at training models that attract and retain the appropriate workforce. Employer partners in this industry include the local Home Builders Association, Kendall Electric, Windemuller, D&W Mechanical, Springfield Roofing, UA Local 85, Airgas, Northern A-1 Services, Builders Exchange, Burdco, and Hallmark Construction.

Healthcare

As expressed in the Regional Plan, Healthcare is a priority industry in the region for very good reason. The very high demand for workers, variety of career options, and extreme lack of skilled workers make this industry especially complex and in need of support.

Sector-based activities are focused on recruitment activities as well as training programs. Networks Northwest dedicates funds for Individual Training Accounts to support multiple C.N.A. trainings, due to such a high need for that occupation.

In addition, we are in the process of launching a region-wide Career Awareness Campaign for the Home Health Aide occupation. This activity was developed as a direct result of an Employer Forum with home health companies, which was conducted in partnership with the region's Area Agency on Aging. Their input indicated that they have sufficient training resources, but struggle to recruit workers and are willing to work collaboratively to bring the community's attention to the job opportunity. The Career Awareness Campaign will identify target audiences such as stay-at-home parents, college students, and recent retirees. The messaging will focus on the rewarding and fulfilling aspect of the career. The campaign will include a dedicated web site with a feed of home health positions posted on Pure Michigan Talent Connect. An ongoing committee of home health agencies will advise and provide input on the campaign. Employer partners in this effort include Monarch Home Health, In-Home Health, Harbor Care Associates, Comfort Keepers, and more.

Multiple work-based training opportunities are available to Agriculture employer customers, including Customized, Incumbent, and On-the-Job Training services, as needed and appropriate. Additionally, non-traditional apprenticeships in home health aide, certified nurse aide, and other healthcare occupations offer an alternative training option for these companies.

Hospitality

Because many hospitality-based positions are seasonal and lower in pay, our services to hospitality employers are focused on assisting with job postings, promoting job openings, and sending customers to job fairs. However, additional services are available for those positions that offer full-time, year-round employment. These services may include On-the-Job Training or enhanced support for recruitment, as needed and appropriate.

Information and Business Services

Many occupations in this sector require college degrees, primarily at the Bachelor's level. The local region's training support is limited to short-term programs, and therefore our sector-based work is focused on Information Technology. These occupations require various industry certifications, stepping stones, and short-term training options. Employer partners represent multiple industries, as well as IT and software companies, because companies from all sectors require IT infrastructure.

An ongoing activity in support of this sector is the Information Technology Career Fair held every spring. This event is conducted in partnership with Northwestern Michigan College. The employers involved in this effort have expressed interest in pre-screening of attendees, and therefore pre-registration is required for the fair. As a result, employers see fewer applicants, but those applicants are typically a very good fit for the open positions. Students from NMC's Computer Information Technology programs also attend, so they can ask questions about the careers available from local companies. Other educational providers exhibit as well, including New Horizons and Ferris State University. Employer partners include SafetyNet, Hagerty Insurance, Munson Medical Center, Wyant Computers, InForth Technology, and more.

Another sector-based activity in Information Technology is the recent development of a Software Developer Apprenticeship program. This program utilizes a customized schedule of classes in NMC's Computer Information Technology – Developer program, in combination with on the job learning.

Multiple work-based training opportunities are available to Agriculture employer customers, including Customized, Incumbent, and On-the-Job Training services, as needed and appropriate.

Coordination with Unemployment Insurance Programs

All workforce development frontline staff are knowledgeable about unemployment insurance programs, but are not in a position to provide individual assistance or answer specific questions. Therefore, they have full access to contact information including phone hotlines and web sites, as well as fact sheets, to best assist clients.

Our region is fortunate to have a UIA Problem Resolution Office located in the Traverse City American Job Center. This has made it much easier to help customers who have questions about their claim and are experiencing problems. In addition, we have a dedicated phone line that is now prioritized in the customer service queue, providing meaningful assistance to claimants. Each Job Center has either a room or a portion of the public resource room that has dedicated computers for use in filing a claim. Step-by-step instructions are also available in a binder.

Employer customers often have questions about the unemployment system, and our Business Liaisons are asked for help. They are well-prepared with web sites, resources, and information to provide to companies. UIA provides informational sessions to companies at least once per year in the region; we are present at this session (it is often held in our conference room) and provide companies with information about our services as well.

In order to ensure that all staff across all programs, including Adult Education and Michigan Rehabilitation Services, are knowledgeable about the resources from UIA, Networks Northwest will

implement annual training sessions. These sessions will identify and share UIA resources, the latest fact sheets and web sites, and any additional information.

Coordination with Economic Development Services

Northwest Michigan embraces the belief that Talent Development *is* Economic Development, and vice-versa. The two are inextricably linked, and rely on each other to cultivate and sustain vibrant communities. For this reason, Networks Northwest has always connected with local economic development agencies and worked collaboratively on individual projects, as well as for the greater good of the region.

Collaborative Development Council

The system is a regular participant in the local Collaborative Development Council, a regional convening of state and local economic development entities. Our participation occurs both at the leadership and frontline levels. The leadership group discusses regional strategies for workforce and economic development, prioritizes local delivery options and special initiatives, and collectively connects with local businesses. On the frontline, Northwest Michigan Works Business Liaisons participate in Retention Visits (see below).

Joint Retention Visits

Building and maintaining relationships with local employers is critical to the success of the entire workforce development system. This is an attribute held in common with economic development agencies. In the Northwest region, the Northwest Michigan Works! Business Liaison, the MEDC Business Development Manager, and a representative from the local economic development entity work together to visit certain companies on an annual basis. These visits, called Joint Retention Visits, allow all partners to learn more about the company. They also allow the company to learn more about services available from multiple systems.

Joint retention visits establish long-term relationships among companies and partner agencies. These relationships are the basis for quality service and effective communication. The retention team represents a vast support network that can help companies to thrive, thereby improving economic stability and community vitality.

Business Enhancement Teams

On a quarterly basis, the Business Liaison convenes a meeting of partner organizations within the geographic area covered. As presented in the Regional Plan, there are four geographic sub-regions in Northwest Michigan: Charlevoix and Emmet Counties (North); Leelanau, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, and Antrim Counties (Middle); Wexford and Missaukee counties (South); and Benzie and Manistee Counties (West). These sub-regions are covered in some cases by one entity for regional services, and in some cases by another entity covering just the counties in the sub-region.

The Business Enhancement Team meeting allows all agencies to connect on a regular basis, and to communicate with each other about priority issues. This may include sharing with the group about a new program, or it could include discussing particular issues at a certain company. It has also occurred that the group sees sub-regional trends among a certain issue, and brainstorms potential solutions.

The members of Business Enhancement Teams include the following representatives for the sub-region:

- Small Business Development Center
- Procurement Technical Assistance Center
- Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center
- Global Trade Alliance
- Michigan Economic Development Corporation
- Local college
- Local economic development entity.

Local colleges are represented according to sub-region:

- North – North Central Michigan College
- Middle – Northwestern Michigan College
- South – Baker College of Cadillac
- West – West Shore Community College

Below are the economic development entities by sub-region:

- North – Northern Lakes Economic Alliance
- Middle – VentureNorth
- South – Cadillac Area Chamber of Commerce and/or City of Cadillac
- West – Alliance for Economic Success

Entrepreneurial skills

Entrepreneurial skills training is available through the Region 2 Small Business Development Center (SBDC), as well as local chapters of SCORE and Junior Achievement. The SBDC offers classes for budding entrepreneurs to help them learn the skills necessary to network, plan, promote, and differentiate their product or service. They then provide one-on-one counseling to new and established businesses that are positioned to grow and add jobs. Connections to these and many other business development services are one of the three primary service categories provided by the Northwest Michigan Works Business Services team. As the team works with local companies and learns about their needs, they identify opportunities to connect their employer customers to SBDC.

One-Stop Delivery System

Networks Northwest provides WIOA Titles I and III via in-house service delivery through its workforce development arm, Northwest Michigan Works!, Inc. Networks Northwest provides administration and coordination for Title II, in partnership with Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District, who delivers the educational services. These services are continuously improved through internal and external feedback, ongoing program development, a close watch on performance measures, and continuous collaboration with local partners. Title IV is delivered by Michigan Rehabilitation Services, and are available through well-connected partnership and referrals from the other programs.

Monitoring of Titles I, II, and III occurs annually. Networks Northwest conducts a review of files, numbers served, and outcomes for Adult, Dislocated Worker (including National Emergency Grants), and Youth;

Adult Education; and Employment Services. Internal monitoring also occurs for PATH, Prisoner Reentry, FAE&T and Trade programs. This provides the opportunity to identify and resolve problems before they impact performance for each individual program. The consistency of monitoring on a regular basis as well as reviewing all programs provides us the ability to see overarching trends over time and across programs. Issues that are discovered through this process inform staff professional development, program changes, and new goals and objectives.

In addition, the Workforce Development Agency monitoring unit conducts reviews three times per year. The program section of WDA conducts comprehensive reviews for each program once every two years. As required by law, Networks Northwest has a single audit conducted by an independent firm.

Within the 10-county region, Northwest Michigan Works! has five one-stop service centers. At each of these centers, job seekers are provided opportunity to prepare, obtain, and advance in meaningful employment. Additionally, employers may access services to easily identify skilled workers and capitalize on other available supports for retaining their current workforce.

Comprehensive service centers are located in Traverse City and Cadillac. Both provide a full-range of high-quality services to both employers and job-seekers.

Traverse City Michigan Works! Service Center 1209 S. Garfield, Suite C Traverse City, MI 49686 (231) 922-3700 Hours of Operation: M - F, 8:00- 5:00	Cadillac Michigan Works! Service Center 401 Lake St, Suite 700 Cadillac, MI 49601 (231) 775-3408 Hours of Operation: M - F, 8:00 - 5:00
--	--

Affiliate service centers are located in Manistee, Petoskey, and Kalkaska. Affiliate centers also provide high-quality services to the public, albeit at reduced hours.

Manistee Michigan Works! Service Center 1660 US 31 South Manistee, MI 49660 (231) 398-3150 Hours of Operation: M, T, Th 8:00 - 12:00, 1:00 - 5:00	Petoskey Michigan Works! Service Center 2240 Summit Park Dr. Petoskey, MI 49770 (231) 347-5150 Hours of Operation: M - Th 8:00 - 12:00, 1:00 - 5:00	Kalkaska Michigan Works! Service Center 103 Third St. Kalkaska, MI 49646 (231) 258-8889 Hours of Operation: W 9:00 - 4:00
---	---	---

Each of the five service centers is co-located with Adult Education programs and services, including Learning Labs. One-stop partners are also co-located, wherever possible and include Michigan Rehabilitation Services, Experience Works, Prisoner Reentry, and Department of Health and Human Services.

The use of technology is especially critical in terms of reaching those in the most rural counties of Northwest Michigan. Four specialized sites have been established in those counties where a one-stop service center is not located: Charlevoix, Antrim, Missaukee, and Benzie counties. At each of these sites,

self-service kiosks provide links to job search assistance that individuals may independently access. The kiosks offer a touch screen computer system that allows easy access to the internet-based resources including: Pure Michigan Talent Connect; O*Net OnLine; Michigan eLibrary; career resource tools; veteran information and resources; local community services; as well as how-to videos for job search, resume development, cover letters, and information videos on various occupations.

Antrim County Kiosk - Antrim County Building Bellaire, MI	Benzie County Kiosk Benzie Area Christian Neighbors Benzonia, MI	Charlevoix County Kiosk Boyne City District Library Boyne City, MI	Missaukee County Kiosk Lake City Library Lake City, MI
---	---	--	---

A unique facet of the Northwest's service delivery model is called the Career Cafe (www.careercafe.org). The Career Cafe allows job seekers to virtually connect to nearly every service available through the one-stop system. The site holds a breadth of resources and tools for customers seeking a job and/or educational training opportunities, retaining a job, or exploring a career change. Demand-driven, Career Cafe specifically identifies "Hot Jobs" which comprise of in-demand occupations and current availabilities in the region. Customers may also connect directly to a Career Facilitator via email to begin engaging in services and plans for employment. Additionally, the Networks Northwest website hosts an orientation video for Northwest Michigan Works! allowing customers to virtually experience the services available at each of the centers. All of these technological tools allow for customers to access one-stop services in a variety of ways, regardless of geographic location throughout the region. The connectivity that the Career Café offers for WIOA Titles I and II will be expanded to incorporate Titles II and IV as well.

Networks Northwest and Northwest Michigan Works!, Inc. are committed to non-discrimination in the delivery of and access to workforce programs and services. This commitment is demonstrated in a myriad of ways, complying with the nondiscrimination provisions of the WIOA and Americans with Disabilities Act.

All registered one-stop center customers receive a copy of the document titled "Equal Opportunity is the Law" as well as the agency's "Complaint Policy and Procedure" handout. This handout outlines the necessary steps in the case a customer suspects discrimination. The "Equal Opportunity is the Law" poster, in English and Spanish, is also prominently displayed in all the one-stop service centers and at Networks Northwest, near public entrances and in common areas. Further, an approved Equal Opportunity tagline is present on all one-stop publications and websites.

Customers are provided appropriate auxiliary aids and services, including assistive technology devices and services, where necessary to afford individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of, the available programs or activities. Reasonable accommodations will be made for those requesting customers to ensure equal access and opportunity. For example, a video phone is provided for individuals who disclose a hearing impairment. The video phone translates words spoken into sign language, which is displayed on the individual's screen.

Training opportunities on matters such as equal opportunity and non-discrimination, the American with Disabilities Act, and serving those individuals with disabilities will be attended by Northwest staff whenever available so as to stay abreast of best practices and procedures. Internally, management regularly provides disability related articles and resources for staff as a reference and tool to ensure the accessibility of individuals with disabilities.

Internal monitoring of programs include provisions for assessing non-discrimination and equal opportunity within each Northwest Michigan Works! service center. Additionally, the Workforce Development Agency monitoring unit conducts an annual review of the Northwest's Equal Opportunity policy and procedures, further ensuring access and opportunity for all individuals.

Partner Name	Program	WIOA Required Partner Category
Northwest Michigan Works!, Inc.	Career Services, ITAs, Employer Services	Title I: Adult, Dislocated Worker
Networks Northwest	Employment Services	Title III: Employment Services
Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District	Adult Education	Title II: Adult Education and Literacy
Michigan Rehabilitation Services	Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling	Title IV: Vocational Rehabilitation
Experience Works	Senior Community Service Employment Program	Title V of the Older Americans Act
Wexford-Missaukee Intermediate School District	Career and Technical Education	Career and Technical Education programs, postsecondary, Carl D. Perkins
Networks Northwest	Trade Act	Trade Act
Workforce Development Agency	Veterans Employment & Training Services	Chapter 41 of Title 38, U.S.C.
Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency	Multiple	Employment and training, Community Services Block Grant
Unemployment Insurance Agency	Unemployment compensation	Unemployment compensation
Michigan Department of Corrections	Michigan Prisoner Reentry	Second Chance Act
Department of Health & Human Services	Cash Assistance	Social Security Act
Department of Health & Human Services	Food Assistance	Food and Nutrition Act

Resource contributions include programs and services provided by each agency, depending upon eligibility, for shared customers via referral. Resource contributions for one-stop infrastructure will be determined and negotiated at a later date.

Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment & Training Activities

Career Services, Basic and Individualized

WIOA Career Services are provided as needed by professional staff in the Resource Rooms and in individual meetings. Through the use of high level technology and a multitude of specialized resources, staff may conduct impromptu training sessions for multiple customers, work with individuals as time and space allow, and make referrals to additional programs. Their services consist of an immediate response to the customer's need, and include the following categories of career development assistance:

Title of Service	Service Description
Before the Search	Identification of barriers to employment including transportation, childcare, personal accountability, and family issues. Michigan Works! staff make referrals to outside resources that can help address these issues.
Get Ready	Assessment of interests, work values, and aptitudes matched with available jobs.
Career Target	Job seekers conduct research using job profiles, videos, informational interviews, and more to determine their chosen career.
Education & Training	Information is provided on local educational resources that prepare job seekers to obtain a job in their chosen career. This includes Michigan Works! Adult Education, local community colleges, and Just in Time trainings. Information is also provided on financial assistance. Workforce development training programs fund many local, short-term programs that prepare individuals for in-demand occupations. Supportive services are also provided so that customers will be successful in completing their training programs.
Résumé & Cover Letter	Assistance with developing an excellent résumé and cover letter, based on feedback from local employers. Multiple resources – on the computer and in hard copy – are available.
Career Search	Assistance with using the many tools for searching and applying for jobs. All customers are asked to enter a profile on Pure Michigan Talent Connect.

Networking	Training on effective networking techniques, including an “elevator pitch,” targeted relationship building, and use of social media for job search purposes.
Interviewing	How to interview appropriately – and what not to do in an interview.
Veterans	Priority of service for veterans and specialized resources to translate skills obtained in the military to civilian job search.

The above categories are presented and accessible to job seekers in-person at the America’s Job Center and virtually through the Career Cafe. The Career Cafe model provides a welcoming atmosphere in each center, and gives customers a menu of options for receiving assistance. The CareerCafe.org web site offers customers a chance to work in a self-directed manner from home, or they can receive staff assistance. Virtual services provided include email interactions, counseling sessions via skype and/or phone, and mock interviews through skype.

Training Services

The focus of training programs is to improve job seeker customer’s skill sets in a way that meets employer demand. Because there is a vast range of skills needed among employers, and a variety of skill sets among the local labor pool, we utilize a variety of training models.

- *Adult Education:* Open-entry, open-exit learning labs assist students to achieve their GED or High School Diploma, improve their basic academic skills, or learn english as a second language. Each student’s education plan is individualized based on thorough, diagnostic assessments. Career planning is integrated into orientation and programming, to ensure that students continue on to postsecondary training and/or on-the-job learning.
- *Classroom Training:* Eligible participants can attend an existing training program that prepares them for an in-demand occupation. Examples include completing a degree, or pursuing a short-term training program such as office assistant, project management, or accounting. This training service is available through the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITA).
- *Work-based Learning Scholarships:* Eligible participants can attend an existing training program that is short-term, occupationally-specific, and incorporates hands-on training. Examples include Certified Nurse Aide and Truck Driving. This training service is available through the use of ITAs.
- *Just-in-Time Training:* Employers work with a training provider of their choice to develop an accelerated vocational training program. Northwest Michigan Works! recruits, screens, and enrolls a full class. Examples include Basic Machining, Welding, and Food Service. This training service is available through the use of ITAs.
- *Customized Training:* Employers work with a training provider of their choice to develop a customized training program. Employers and Northwest Michigan Works! together conduct recruitment, screening, and interviewing. Employers commit to hire successful trainees and contribute 50% of the cost of the training.

- *On-the-Job Training:* Employers hire an eligible participant and provide training on the job. The employer is reimbursed 50% of the worker's wage for the training period.
- *Incumbent Worker Training:* Northwest Michigan Works! can subsidize the cost of training for existing workers. Funds are limited, but application is easy and eligibility of training participants is simpler than other training programs.

With the exception of On-the-Job, Customized and Incumbent Worker Training, all of the above training models must result in an industry-recognized credential.

Unlike with the previous legislation (Workforce Investment Act – WIA), Adults and Dislocated Workers are not required to access basic career services prior to enrolling in the program. However, many individuals seek additional assistance if they are unable to secure employment with self-directed and/or staff facilitated services in the resource rooms. Many individualized career services are also available prior to enrollment in a program, however customers who require long-term one-on-one career advising, and/or who enter a WIA-funded training program, must enroll in the WIA Adult or Dislocated Worker program.

Customers meet individually with a Career Advisor to discuss eligibility criteria. They are told about all requirements. Customers must provide all required documentation and must complete all forms. The Career Advisor tracks all documentation and requirements, ensuring that all are fulfilled prior to enrollment. The checklists used in the process and for completion of the customer's file are attached as Appendix E.

Youth Workforce Investment Activities

Youth and young adults in the region are impacted by many factors. These include housing, nutrition, health care, parental support, transportation, drug use, and criminal behavior. Partners of the workforce investment system and other service providers are available to address many of these issues. These providers include school homelessness services, free and reduced breakfast and lunch programs, county health departments, public transportation, substance abuse treatment providers, and juvenile justice.

In a perfect scenario, all of the above issues would be resolved and/or not applicable. Supportive and healthy environments would make fertile ground for teaching employability skills, and drop-out prevention would not be necessary. While the above providers are doing their part to address these issues, the workforce investment system must do its part to support youth in their efforts to prepare for sustainable, family-supporting employment.

In order to most effectively meet the needs of youth in the region, the following services will be available to youth ages 16 to 24:

- Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to secondary school completion, including dropout prevention strategies;
- Alternative secondary school offerings or dropout recovery services;
- Paid and unpaid work experiences with an academic and occupational education component;
- Occupational skill training, with a focus on recognized postsecondary credentials and in-demand occupations;

- Leadership development activities (e.g., community service, peer-centered activities);
- Supportive services;
- Adult mentoring;
- Follow-up services for at least 12 months after program completion;
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling;
- Integrated education and training for a specific occupation or cluster;
- Financial literacy education;
- Entrepreneurial skills training;
- Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services;
- Postsecondary preparation and transition activities.

These required program elements will be delivered in a seamless fashion, with individualized strategies to fit the needs of each youth participant.

The following framework services will be delivered directly by Northwest Michigan Works! staff:

- Supportive services;
- Follow-up services for at least 12 months after program completion; and
- Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services.

The remaining eleven program elements will be delivered through partner entities. If services provided are paid services funded by WIOA Youth, then the selected provider will be procured through competitive bid. If the service is provided free of charge by the partner, then the provider will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with Networks Northwest.

The transition from WIA to WIOA has a significant impact on the Youth program. The Northwest region had primarily focused its efforts on assisting in-school youth, as a means of preventing drop-outs, recovering credits, and ensuring long-term educational success. The new plan to shift the focus to out-of-school youth will involve several changes to our programming. In addition, funding levels for this program year are 22% less than last year. This significant drop in funding has impacts on programming as well. Ramifications of both funding decreases and programmatic changes are as follows:

- The Beaver Island Lighthouse School (BILS), an alternative, residential school that was previously operated as a partnership with TBAISD and Charlevoix Public Schools, will be suspended. Because the primary student population for this school would be categorized as In-School Youth, Networks Northwest will not have adequate funding to continue its support of the funding mix required. As of this writing, the school will be suspended for a one year period while other sources of funding can be acquired.
- Staffing levels will be decreased by one Full Time Equivalent. The reduction will occur in the BILS program.
- In the past, both In-School Youth and Out-of-School Youth (younger and older for WIA) were served by the same program with a single team of staff members. The changes due to WIOA

necessitate a division into two separate but related programs. See the plan sections below for details on services for the two separate programs of In-School Youth and Out-of-School Youth.

- Urgent need for diversification of funding to support youth employment and training programming in the region.
- Stronger connection to MRS is needed in order to assist in-school youth referral sources to access Pre-Employment Transitional Services.

Out-of-School Youth

There is need in the Northwest region to provide intensive, specialized services for young adults who are not in school and struggling with multiple barriers. Residents age 16-19 and 20-24 experience unemployment at much higher levels than the rest of the population, at 22.9% and 15.5% respectively.²⁶ This group is in need of help and will be served if they meet the following eligibility criteria:

- A. Age 16 to 24 and not attending school; and
- B. Fall within one or more of the following categories:
 1. Individual with a disability
 2. School dropout
 3. Not attended school for at least the most recent complete school year calendar quarter.
 4. A high school graduate who is basic skills deficient or an English language learner
 5. Offender
 6. Homeless, runaway, or foster child
 7. Pregnant or parenting
 8. A low-income individual who requires additional assistance to enter or complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment

The Northwest region's strategy for serving out-of-school youth ages 16 to 24 is to develop a comprehensive mix of services, utilizing an intensive case management model. This model will focus on a "whole-life" approach: education, work, soft skills, life skills, employability skills, leadership, and more. The goal is for year-long participation in the program, with movement in & out over time and 12 more months of follow-up services.

Two case managers, called Youth Advisors, will split the region to serve 50 to 60 out of school youth. The Youth Advisors will work with program participants to create an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) for each youth. This plan will identify barriers, and select any and all of the 14 program elements that are appropriate to that individual youth. The ISS is a dynamic document, and will change throughout participation to reflect goals obtained and changes to the participant's situation.

In order to ensure that youth have experience-based opportunities, the program will incorporate a part-time, minimum wage Work Experience program for each student in the public or private sector. This will provide youth with the most effective form of soft skills training, while also supporting them with intensive case management and job coaching.

In addition to the multitude of services, all those enrolled in the program will meet as a cohort each quarter for a full-day mini-conference for counseling, discussion, support, soft skills, life skills,

²⁶ US Bureau of the Census, 2010-2014 American Community Survey Five-year Estimates

employability skills, leadership training and more. Participants will be provided with a stipend for attendance at these sessions. A local needs-based payments policy will be developed.

All youth in the program will achieve an industry-recognized credential. If lacking a high school diploma or GED, the participant will work with the Adult Ed Learning Labs, dually enrolling in both WIOA titles. In order to best facilitate retention and completion of the credential, programming will use a distance learning model and on-line programs for high school completion. In addition, the ISS will plan for long-term success, and include a transition to postsecondary vocational training upon completion with the Learning Labs. For any out-of-school youth who already has a diploma or GED, the plan will incorporate a credentialed postsecondary occupational training. Examples may include Certified Nurse Aid, Truck Driving, construction, CNC, and a host of other short-term trainings that will lead to employment in an in-demand occupation.

Out-of-school Youth with disabilities will be assisted with the mix of services appropriate to their needs, and will be connected to Michigan Rehabilitation Services for vocational rehabilitation counseling.

Within the program year, the team and administrative staff will develop a new name for the Out-of-School Youth program. This name will be connected enough with the Northwest Michigan Works! brand that it will be readily identifiable as coming from the workforce development system, but will also be appealing to the target population and recognizable as the designated youth services.

The end goal of all activity is full time employment and long-term retention. Each youth's ISS will facilitate all of the goals, objectives, and milestones, in order to achieve success.

In-School Youth

Services for youth who are currently in school will be coordinated in a classroom setting, with individual appointments as well.

Eligibility for in-school youth is as follows:

- A. Age 14 to 21 and attending school; (young people with disabilities can be under 14); and
- B. Low-income individual; and
- C. Fall within one or more of the following categories:
 - 1. Individual with a disability
 - 2. Basic skills deficient
 - 3. English language learner
 - 4. Offender
 - 5. Homeless, runaway, or foster child
 - 6. Pregnant or parenting
 - 7. An individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment

The local policy defining Youth who Need Additional Assistance is attached to this plan as Appendix F.

The region's in-school youth program will utilize the Jobs for Michigan's Graduates model. This model recognizes that adult intervention helps youth make the right choices, but it is often missing from the

lives of disadvantaged youth. It is also essential that youth learn “soft skills,” the types of skills that are applicable to any job. These include communication, teamwork, problem-solving, respect for authority, and personal accountability. These are the skills in highest demand from employers around the region, regardless of industry or occupation.

The Jobs for Michigan’s Graduates (JMG) program incorporates all of the above and more. Positive relationships with adult instructors are a foundation of the program. The curriculum consists of teaching youth 37 competencies that prepare them to be strong citizens and effective workers.

Networks Northwest will braid JMG together with WIOA In-School Youth, both in terms of funding and programming. We have entered into a contract with the Kinexus, the JMG administrative entity, for the last two years and intend to do so again for Fiscal Year 2017. We will partner with the local Career Tech Centers, as well as alternative schools to deliver the program and meet performance requirements of both funding sources. Services will take place in the schools, preferably as a class during regular hours. Three JMG Specialists will be employed to deliver the program. Our goal is to serve 150 students minimum in JMG, with enrollments in WIOA for students who are eligible.

In-school Youth with disabilities will be assisted with the mix of services appropriate to their needs, and will be connected to Michigan Rehabilitation Services for Pre-Employment Transition Counseling.

Coordination with Education

The Northwest Michigan Talent District Career Council (TDCC) is a committee of the Networks Northwest Board. It is comprised of representatives from all three intermediate school districts (ISD), all four postsecondary institutions, private sector (including workforce development board members), and workforce system staff. The purpose of the TDCC is to assist the Board in its role of strategic leadership for all workforce programming in the ten-county region. The TDCC’s focus is educational and training programs, and connections to opportunities for youth and adults returning to the world of education.

The TDCC is charged with implementation of three goals from the workforce board’s Strategic Agenda:

- Increase work-based learning opportunities, including internships, co-op, job shadowing, and apprenticeships.
- Increase student/parent/teacher career days and tours of local businesses.
- Connect Education Development Plans to career goals.

The TDCC has been actively involved in work-based learning opportunities. Each ISD’s career tech programs offer co-ops for credit. In addition, the career tech programs have partnered with Northwest Michigan Works! youth services to conduct Talent Tours at local companies.

When the Strategic Agenda was first developed, the three ISDs in the region worked together to create a regional strategic plan that aligned with the workforce board’s goals. In doing so, they created a program that adds value to the Education Development Plan (EDP). EDPs are a requirement for 8th grade students in Michigan. The purpose of an EDP is to help guide a student’s class choices through high school, so that he/she will be prepared to continue on the appropriate track, whether technical education, traditional college, or employment. However, the EDP is minimal at best, as it has become

another burden on school administrators. This new program offers a developed curriculum that provides career exploration at the 5th, 8th, and 10th grades. The curriculum allows teachers to integrate the process into their lesson plans. It is no longer an additional burden, but rather helps teachers to meet their Michigan merit requirements. The program is being piloted in one local district per ISD.

In addition to use of the TDCC for connection and coordination with education institutions, the workforce system develops and maintains relationships with public and private training providers. Northwest Michigan Works! employs dedicated staff members to specialize in training programs. These individuals are the go-to resource for knowledge of training vendors and programs; their role is to support career advisors (regardless of program), manage ITAs, and maintain relationships with training vendors.

Another area where relationships with training vendors is critical is in employer services. All postsecondary institutions in the region offer training programs for employers, either already developed or customized based on need. Educators are often invited to attend the Employer Forums (see Business Services and Engaging Employers using Sector Initiatives sections) so they can hear first-hand from employers about skill shortages and workforce needs. Each Business Liaison on our Business Services Team serves on at least one advisory board for programs at the local career tech center and/or college. Business Liaisons often call on community college partners to access the New Jobs Training Fund program, and to connect companies with training services for Customized Training, Incumbent Work Training, and Skilled Trades Training Fund. Although communication is regular and ongoing throughout the year, the Business Enhancement Teams offer an opportunity for formal sharing of new programs, focus areas, and needs with education partners.

Supportive Services

Northwest Michigan Works! provides supportive services to eligible participants in the following programs: Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, PATH, FAE&T and Prisoner Reentry. MRS also provides supports as part of the Individual Plan for Employment. One of the most daunting barriers to employment in our large, rural region is transportation. With limited public transit available, and long distances to travel to jobs and training, this supportive service has been extremely important to ensuring participant success. Required clothing for training or for the first few weeks of employment are provided. These may include steel-toed boots, scrubs, and safety glasses. Assistive devices may be provided to those with disabilities.

The process for providing supportive services includes an assessment by the case manager to determine the barrier and which supportive service will be most helpful. The case manager seeks other sources of support, through referrals to partner agencies. If a supportive service is deemed necessary, the case manager makes a request and a manager reviews and approves or denies it. The barrier and supportive service is documented in the participant's Individual Service Strategy in the One-Stop Management Information System or in the IPE by the vocational rehabilitation counselor.

The local supportive services policy is attached to this plan as Appendix G.

In every county throughout the region, a human services collaborative body convenes multiple human services organizations on a monthly basis. This group represents a vast array of supportive services and

other applicable community resources. Northwest Michigan Works! participates with every group and regularly attends meetings, representing WIOA Titles I, II, and III. MRS also participates, representing WIOA Title IV. Through this connection, the entire workforce system is made aware of numerous resources and initiatives. Recent examples of programs and supports that have been shared at meetings and through an email listserv are:

- Application fair for Section 8 housing
- New substance abuse prevention program
- Support network for adoptive families
- Community Health Needs Assessment
- Affordable Care Act navigator available at the local health clinic
- Applications for the Double Up Food Bucks program
- Training for case managers working with people with disabilities

The above are just a few examples of the wealth of information that is shared through these groups. Information also includes new staff at partner agencies, changes in bus routes, new times for food pantries, etc.

Coordination with Supportive Services

In addition to the strategic coordination provided by Networks Northwest (described in the regional plan), frontline staff in the American Job Centers and at MRS are well-versed in transportation resources, and make an effort to inform transportation partners about ours. In addition to the supportive services described above, the staff have access to directories and schedules for local transit authorities, where they are available. The resource room computers have links to local transportation providers. Workshop calendars are shared with transit authorities for placement on the busses and in waiting rooms. Periodically, transportation partners are invited to present at staff meetings so that our knowledge of their programs and services are up to date. This also provides the opportunity to share information about workforce development services.

Because the frontline staff are so knowledgeable about the challenges of the workforce, especially those with barriers to employment, they have become a source of data and anecdotal information for transportation planning. The staff attend transportation planning events and summits, providing insight on behalf of those who are most in need of the services.

Coordination with Adult Education

In 2002, funding for Adult Education in Michigan was reduced from \$80 million to \$20 million. At this time, several adult education programs in the region were unable to continue providing services. Those who were going out of business approached Networks Northwest and Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District, and asked that a partnership be formed to ensure that services would remain available despite the drastic reduction in resources. The two entities formed a relationship that remains intact to this day.

The roles and responsibilities of each entity are outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement, attached as Appendix H. In short, the school district receives funds, employs teachers, and awards credit. The workforce system coordinates the program, contributes WIOA funding both from Title II and from its facilities budget, and employs Lab Aids to support the teachers.

TBAISD is the regional fiscal agent for Adult Education state aid funding. In addition to its partnership with Networks Northwest for Michigan Works! Adult Ed Learning Labs, TBAISD has a partnership with Cadillac Area Public Schools to house a high school completion Learning Lab at the Wexford-Missaukee Career Tech Center. The two providers work together on professional development, training, and meeting performance objectives.

The following Adult Education services are available throughout the region from all Learning Labs:

- Adult Basic Education
- High School Completion
- GED
- English Language Learning (formerly English as a Second Language)
- Workplace Literacy
- Citizenship

A mix of online, computerized, book-based, and group-based instruction is used. Distance Learning is also available due to the online system utilized.

Multiple other providers of literacy services and English Language Learning programs are in existence in the region, including literacy councils and remedial programs from local colleges. The workforce system coordinates services with these providers in a variety of ways. In 2014, we convened an Adult Learning Partnership that brought together representatives from all of the stakeholders. This partnership jointly developed the following programs:

- A new web site was created to help residents of the region who are interested in accessing adult education opportunities. This web site focuses on the need of the student, and the program they are most likely to look for when coming to the site. All literacy councils in the region, along with Learning Labs, are listed here. The information includes address, phone, hours, instructors, and email. The potential student can browse or search by program or by geographic location. www.NorthwestMichiganAdultEd.org.
- TAPET (Transitioning Adults to Postsecondary Education and Training). This program consisted of multiple initiatives that were designed to help adult education students continue their education beyond GED or high school completion. This was done knowing that in today's economy, postsecondary training is essential to improving an individual's economic opportunities. Initiatives included:
 - Career Preparation Course, incorporating career assessments, planning, and goals related to their adult learning plan;
 - Study Skills Course, designed to help them in both their adult education program as well as in college;
 - Campus Day Visits, giving adult ed students tours of local colleges, an opportunity that many of them missed earlier in life because they didn't finish traditional high school;

- Financial Aid Application support, such as specialized workshops and classes with financial aid officers from local colleges;
- Mentoring program, which paired former adult education students who have been successful in their postsecondary programs with new students;
- On-site Compass diagnostic testing, which allowed the Learning Labs to administer the Compass entrance test in such a way that the adult learning plan could be designed to address areas of difficulty.
- A new web site was created to help all non-traditional students with learning more about postsecondary opportunities. The focus is assisting adults with accessing the many resources available at local colleges that can address barriers. These resources include mentoring, tutoring, writing centers, math support, and more. All of these supports and the colleges that offer them are readily available at the new web site: www.CollegeforAdultStudents.org.

MOUs

Memorandums of Understanding with each WIOA required partner, as well as youth program element providers who will not be receiving funds, are currently in development. Executed MOUs will be submitted to the Workforce Development Agency upon completion.

Grant Recipient

The Northwest Michigan Council of Governments is responsible for disbursement of grant funds. This entity, now doing business as Networks Northwest, has had numerous federal contracts over many years. The agency has been a State of Michigan sub-recipient to deliver federally-funded programs under the Workforce Investment Act, The Wagner-Peyser Employment Service, the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families welfare-to-work program, Trade Act, and several other workforce development programs for 40 years. In addition to workforce development programs, Networks Northwest administers business and community development programs for the ten-county region. These include Small Business Development Center, Procurement Technical Assistance Center, Global Trade Alliance, several sector alliances, and Michigan Prisoner Reentry. The agency is also the local Regional Planning Organization, which provides numerous services to local governments and their communities throughout the region.

The grant recipient has decided to direct deliver services, therefore the competitive process to award sub-grants and contracts does not apply.

High-Performing Board

In 2014, Networks Northwest became the state's first agency to reach Tier 3 of Governor Snyder's Regional Prosperity Initiative. This was done by combining the workforce development board and the local elected officials board, and adding representation from additional community stakeholders. This new Regional Prosperity Board serves as the governing body for Networks Northwest.

The board developed a clear mission and vision for the organization, attached as Appendix I, as well as organizational hallmarks and values.

The Board has these primary purposes:

- To provide strategic resources (data, leadership, education, publications, models, staff time, funds, etc.) for the region's economic and community vitality.
- To provide for an annual Regional Prosperity Plan for use by community officials, businesses and organizations.
- To discuss and create macro-level recommendations for impact around the core elements of the Regional Prosperity Plan.
- To connect and support regional networks around topics related to economic and community vitality.
- To provide oversight for financial and operational effectiveness. This is done largely through five committees: Executive/Governance; Finance/Audit; Quality Assurance; Talent District Career Council; Prosperity Index.

Networks Northwest prides itself on being well-connected to the employer community in the region. This is evidenced by robust board membership, with representation from local chambers of commerce, economic development, every in-demand industry sector, small family-owned companies, and the largest employers in the area.

The board is committed to ongoing and continuous improvement, which will ensure that it serves as a high-performing board. At the time of this writing, the Governor's Talent Investment Board has not issued factors or criteria. However, the following standards have been established locally, to ensure that each board member as well as the board as a whole is serving with the utmost quality.

- Each new board member attends an extensive board orientation session;
- Every board member is assigned to a committee;
- Meeting agendas are designed for strategic discussion on topics that have significant impact on program design, service delivery, and community vitality;
- Board meetings and committees emphasize assessment of the agency's fiscal and programmatic performance;
- The board is data-driven, utilizing the following quantitative information to guide program direction and strategic decision-making: performance outcomes, audits and monitoring reviews, labor market information, and numerous prosperity and economic indicators;
- Recruitment of new membership targets those who express interest in being active and engaged;
- Annual planning includes purposeful engagement of the board with legislators and other significant groups of influence;
- Board members review and share best practices with agency staff;
- Professional development for board members is available through attendance at conferences and economic/education summits;
- The agency ensures participation of board members in presenting the annual report to groups and communities they represent.

Standards of effectiveness and continuous improvement criteria for assessing the American Job Centers will be developed during the timeframe of this plan.

When one-stop infrastructure funds are identified and negotiated, the local board will establish a plan for allocating these funds.

Individual Training Accounts

Training services are available to eligible participants in need of additional skills to achieve long-term, sustainable employment via Individual Training Accounts. Career Advisors work with customers to assess skill sets, identify training needs, and plan for appropriate training services. The customer is tasked with conducting research to ensure commitment and suitability. In addition, the career advisor counsels the participant on training choices, and facilitates access to the MiTraining Connect list of approved training vendors. Upon selection of a training program, the participant then meets with the Classroom Training Specialist, who helps with contacting the institution, program enrollment, and planning specific training services. The participant signs an Occupational Training Agreement, which identifies the training provider, program, training start and end dates, approximate cost by class or program, and support services necessary to participate. This agreement then generates vouchers to fund the planned services.

Public Comment

This plan has been published for public comment and review on the agency's website. Members of the local board and members of the public, including representatives of business and labor organizations, may review the plan by downloading it from www.networksnorthwest.org/localplans or contacting the Networks Northwest office at 231-929-5000. Comments may be submitted to Networks Northwest via the comment form on the website, or through the phone number above.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the plan will be made available in alternate formats, such as large print or audiotape, in response to special requests. All Networks Northwest board meetings are open to the public, comply with the physical requirements of the ADA, and welcome public comment.

Outreach for the purpose of reviewing the plan will be conducted in the following ways:

- Direct email to partner organizations, informing them of the opportunity to comment and encouraging their review and feedback;
- Legal notices in local newspapers;
- Notice in the Networks Northwest email newsletter.

Comments received will be responded to individually. Modifications may be made to the plan if comments are determined to be significant enough to warrant plan adjustments. Comments and responses will be attached to the plan in the final version and submitted to the Workforce Development Agency.

Technology Integration

Several of the WIOA programs, as well as partnered programs, are integrated via the One-Stop Management Information System (OSMIS). This is one tool which staff may use to enhance fundamental case management tasks across programs such as WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth; Employment Services; Welfare Reform; Food Assistance Employment and Training; and Trade Act.

Additionally, customers and staff may interact virtually through the CareerCafe.org web site. Staff is able to provide case management services such as job counseling, review resumes, coordinate online interviews with employers and more through use of Skype, email, and/or the telephone. Program partners may engage using these tools, as well to enhance the case management experience for all those involved with the customer.

Networks Northwest uses the G*STARS membership system for customer tracking. Customers are issued a membership card and password at intake. Whenever customers return, they swipe or login to the kiosk and indicate the services they will use while at the American Job Center. This tool provides us with data regarding number of customers and which services they utilize.

The system recently purchased a career assessment tool, Kuder Journey for the adult population and Kuder Navigator for youth. This tool is available to all programs in the system, including all core programs. This assessment tool acts as a communication venue between a case manager and customer. The customer owns the profile and can work through multiple steps to achieve goals identified in the Individual Service Strategy. Multiple case managers can work together through this tool to collectively assist the customer as needed.

Northwest Michigan Works! uses Salesforce for recording services to employer customers. This system allows us to share information with local economic development organizations and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. We track multiple aspects of our services, including recruitment, job postings, job fills, and hiring events; training services; retention visits; and referrals made to partner organizations.

We look forward to the technology changes planned by the Workforce Development Agency to assist in enhanced integration of the OSMIS, customer tracking, employer services, and assessment tools.

Priority of Service

Individualized Career Services may be provided to those who qualify based on WIOA eligibility criteria. These criteria also provide the baseline of eligibility for Training Services. The Northwest Michigan Workforce Development Board endorsed a local priority of service policy for Training Services that gives priority to those most in need.

Additional priority levels have been determined based on the high need for skilled workers to fill jobs in key in-demand occupations. Priority of service is applied when the number of eligible participants who are seeking training exceeds the availability of funding for training.

Veterans and eligible spouses are given top priority, providing they meet eligibility criteria and are deemed suitable for training, as is consistent with the Job for Veterans Act of 2002.

Priority levels are outlined in the following order:

- Recipients of public assistance;
- Low-income individuals;
- Individuals who are basics skill deficient;
- Unemployed individuals;
- Employed individuals, whose family income is below the locally defined Self-Sufficiency Level;
 - The locally defined Self-Sufficiency Level takes into consideration an individual's income based on specific categories of family size as well as county of residence. The Michigan League for Public Policy has developed a Basic Needs Income Level for each county in Michigan. An individual may be considered below the locally defined Self-Sufficiency Level if her/his income is below the Basic Needs Income Level for her/his family size and county of residence, as determined by the Basic Needs Calculator (<http://www.mlpp.org/calculator/>).
- Employed individual whose employer has determined that training will provide the skills necessary to retain employment or to have the potential to move up within the company (Incumbent Workers only).

The full Local Policy is attached to this plan as Appendix J.

Rapid Response

Rapid Response activities are fulfilled through the Business Services division of Michigan Works! Business Liaisons are assigned to specific county territories to provide employer customers easy access to the full range of workforce/economic development services available through the Northwest Michigan Works! system. Serving as the MWA representative on the Rapid Response Team, the Business Liaison works closely with the Workforce Development Agency, State of Michigan Rapid Response Section, providing the assistance necessary to ensure that workers transition to new employment as quickly as possible.

The Business Liaisons maintain ongoing contact with the Rapid Response Section Workforce Consultant. Often being the first to hear of a pending closure or layoff, they have made it a practice to notify the Workforce Consultant immediately upon learning of any forthcoming worker dislocation in their assigned territory, whether or not a Worker Adjustment Retraining Notification (WARN) notice is required.

The close relationships already established between Michigan Works! Business Liaisons and local employers often pave the way to successful Rapid Response meetings. When a local employer is facing massive layoffs or closure, trust is a critical factor because of the often confidential information that is revealed at these meetings. Business Liaisons, along with the RRS Workforce Consultant, inform the employer and union representative(s) of the array of services available to dislocated workers, providing reassurance in the process.

We are currently utilizing funds from three National Emergency Grants for training options for the Long-term Unemployed and for affected workers of a mass layoff. These programs have been successful in our region, providing incentives to employers, additional training options, support services, and connection to permanent jobs to those who are eligible for services.

The local Rapid Response policy is attached as Appendix K.

Appendix A: Hot Jobs Report

Hot Jobs Report



Denotes STEM Careers

Advanced
Manufacturing

Agriculture

Energy
Transportation,
and
Construction

Health Care

Hospitality

Information
and
Business
Services

Education Level	Advanced Manufacturing	Average Entry Level Wage Range
High School Diploma and some training	Assemblers	\$9-\$12
	Sewing Machine Operators	\$9-\$15
Technical Certificate or Associate's Degree	Machine Maintenance Techs and Industrial Mechanics	\$18-\$22
	Mechanical Technicians	\$23
	Machinists	\$10-\$13
	Welders	\$10-\$15
	Designers, Drafters (CAD/CAM)	\$12-\$15
	CNC Machine Operators	\$15-\$22
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	Engineers: Mechanical, Quality, Process, Design, Mechatronics, Biomedical, Industrial	\$24-\$28
	Sales Representatives (Manufacturing and Wholesale)	\$25-\$28 (including commission)

Education Level	Agriculture	Average Entry Level Wage Range
High School Diploma and some training	Farm Laborers	\$10-\$14
	Slaughterers and Meat Cutters	\$12-\$14
Technical Certificate or Associate's Degree	Farm Managers and Supervisors	\$20-\$25
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	Engineers: Health and Safety	\$25-\$30

Education Level	Energy, Transportation, and Construction	Average Entry Level Wage Range
High School Diploma and some training	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	\$18-\$22
	Light Truck or Delivery Service Drivers	\$14
Technical Certificate or Associate's Degree	Heavy Equipment Operators	\$18-\$22
	Freight, Stock and Material Movers	\$12.50
	Construction Laborers	\$10-\$13
	Automotive Service Technicians	\$12-\$16
	Heavy Equipment Mechanics	\$16-\$20
	Diesel Mechanics	\$16-\$20
	Industrial Mechanical Technicians	\$20-\$23
	General Maintenance and Repair Workers	\$16
	HVAC Technicians	\$19-\$22
	Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers	\$32
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	Engineers: Electrical, Mechanical, Industrial	\$33-\$41

Education Level	Health Care	Average Entry Level Wage Range
High School Diploma and some training	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	\$8.50-\$11
	Certified Nursing Assistants	\$10-\$13
Technical Certificate or Associate's Degree	Medical Assistants	\$10-\$14
	Receptionists and Information Clerks	\$10-\$12
	Medical Secretaries	\$11-\$13
	Dental Assistants	\$16
	Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN)	\$18-\$20
	EMT/Paramedic	\$14-\$16
	Medical Records and Billing Coders	\$13-\$15
	Pharmacy Technicians	\$11-\$13
	Healthcare Technicians (variety)	\$12-\$22
	Registered Nurses (RN)	\$22-\$24
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	Dental Hygienists	\$24-\$28
	Physical Therapy Assistants	\$18-\$20
	Medical and Health Services Managers	\$30-\$35
	Physicians and Surgeons	\$90
	Physical Therapists	\$36
	Pharmacists	\$45-\$50
	Occupational Therapists	\$30-\$33

Education Level	Hospitality	Average Entry Level Wage Range
High School Diploma and some training	Combined Food Prep and Servers (Fast Food)	\$9-\$11
	Servers, Bartenders, Hosts	\$9-\$12
	Cooks and Food Prep. Workers	\$9-\$13
	Sales Representatives	\$10-\$24 (including commissions)
	Retail Salespersons	\$8.50-\$11
	Supervisors of Food Prep and Serving Staff	\$14-\$17
	Housekeeping	\$10
	Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	\$10-\$12.50
	Gaming Dealers, Attendants, and Service Workers	\$9-\$13
	Hotel and Restaurant Managers	\$14-\$24
Technical Certificate or Associate's Degree		

Education Level	Information and Business Services	Average Entry Level Wage Range
High School Diploma and some training	Office Clerks and Administrative Assistants	\$10-\$13
	Customer Service Representatives	\$12-\$14
	Bookkeepers, Accounting Clerks, Billing and Posting Clerks	\$10-\$14
	Janitors and Cleaners	\$10-\$12.50
	Garbage and Recyclable Collectors	\$15
	Supervisors of Office/Admin Workers and other Business Operation Specialists (middle mgmt.)	\$18-\$22
Technical Certificate or Associate's Degree	Accountants and Auditors	\$17-\$24
	Software Developers & Programmers	\$24-\$28
	Tech Support Specialists	\$12-\$14
	Systems Analysts	\$25-\$28
	Network Administrators	\$24-\$28
	Insurance Sales Agents	\$20-\$25
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	General and Operations Managers	\$32-\$38
	Marketing Specialists	\$24-\$28

FRAMEWORK
FOR OUR FUTUREA REGIONAL PROSPERITY PLAN
FOR NORTHWEST LOWER MICHIGAN

Connecting You to Opportunities

Networks
Northwest

Talent / Business / Community

NEWTON'S
ROADSTEM Careers require middle to high level technical skills in
Science, Technology, Engineering, and/or Math.
These occupations are projected to grow four times faster than other occupations nationally.

Appendix B: Workforce Development Board Strategic Agenda

Northwest Michigan Workforce Development Board & Northwest Michigan Works, Inc.
A program of Northwest Michigan Council of Governments
Strategic Agenda, 2013-2020

Developed as a result of the Governor's Economic and Education Summits,
and the subsequent Northwest Regional Talent Summit, all held between March-May, 2013.

SUMMARY PAGE

Overriding Imperative:

Attract, develop & retain TALENT as a key driver for economic prosperity in Northwest Mi.

Goal 1: Increase occupational exposure and education at the high school and post-secondary levels, in ways that meet multiple learning styles, expose learners to real world jobs, and respond to employers' skill needs now and over the coming decade.

<u>Strategy A:</u> Increase work-based learning opportunities including internships, co-op, job shadowing, and apprenticeships.	<u>Strategy B:</u> Provide teachers with summer fellowships at local employers so they can contextualize subject matter to occupations.	<u>Strategy C:</u> Increase student/parent/teacher career days and tours of businesses (Talent Tours).	<u>Strategy D:</u> Utilize media networks/avenues for marketing career opportunities to students, parents and other adults.
---	---	--	---

Goal 2: Improve the foundational skills of both the current and future work force.

<u>Strategy A:</u> Connect EDPs to career goals.	<u>Strategy B:</u> Develop & deliver a refresher course for foundational skills for adults.
--	---

Goal 3: Attract and retain more young adults for all kinds of professional and technical positions.

<u>Strategy A:</u> Develop a single point of information for recruitment and retention strategies.	<u>Strategy B:</u> Develop Talent Co-ops for pooling of resources for industry-specific talent attraction.	<u>Strategy C:</u> Promote quality of life in Northwest MI.; implement "attract back" activities for high school and college graduates of the region.	<u>Strategy D:</u> Develop a campaign to educate employers about factors that attract young people.
--	--	---	---

Goal 4: Increase diversity of job opportunities in the region.

<u>Strategy A:</u> Establish a system for "entrepreneurship apprenticeships" and entrepreneurship incubator(s).	<u>Strategy B:</u> Promote the telecommute economy and fiber infrastructure/high speed internet; develop telecommuting centers.	<u>Strategy C:</u> Reinforce the essential connections among place-making, jobs, community vitality and economic prosperity.	<u>Strategy D:</u> Promote multi-cultural events and foreign student opportunities.	<u>Strategy E:</u> Target wealthy visitors & residents for business attraction and social entrepreneurship.
---	---	--	---	---

Northwest Michigan Workforce Development Board & Northwest Michigan Works, Inc.
A program of Northwest Michigan Council of Governments
Strategic Agenda, 2013-2020

Developed as a result of the Governor's Economic and Education Summits,
and the subsequent Northwest Regional Talent Summit, all held between March-May, 2013.

DETAILED

Overriding Imperative:

Attract, develop & retain TALENT as a key driver for economic prosperity in Northwest Mi.

Goal 1: Increase occupational exposure and education at the high school and post-secondary levels, in ways that meet multiple learning styles, expose learners to real world jobs, and respond to employers' skill needs now and over the coming decade.

Strategy	Tactics	Primary Responsibility	Key Partner(s)	Essential Activities	Timing
Strategy A: Increase work-based learning opportunities including internships, co-op, job shadowing, and apprenticeships.	Incorporate work-based components into all MW just-in-time trainings.	- Northwest Michigan Works	- Businesses and industry cluster partnerships - Training schools - WDA	- Build into all training designs and RFPs	Immediate & ongoing
	Develop non-traditional apprenticeship models for high school grads and adults.	- Northwest Michigan Works	- Post-secondary institutions - Businesses and industry cluster partnerships - DOL	- Use previous CNA Apprenticeship as a model - Develop curriculum/work models for other occupations	Immediate & ongoing
	Increase internship, co-op and job shadowing activities for high school students, to help students	- WDB's Education Advisory Group	- ISDs – Career Tech Centers - High schools - Businesses and industry cluster	- Build models and examples - Utilize Career Pathways materials to integrate into	Develop during 2013-2014 school year; Implement in

	understand careers and appropriate workplace behaviors.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - partnerships Parents/students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - curriculums Promote widely - Implement in early-adopting schools - Continue to promote for expansion 	2014-2015 school year and ongoing
Strategy B: Provide teachers with summer fellowships at local employers so they can contextualize subject matter to occupations.	Develop fellowship model with key employment sectors in each sub-region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WDB's Education Advisory Group - ISDs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - K-12 school districts - Businesses and industry cluster partnerships - Business associations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design/develop program - Market program - Find sponsors - Implement - Continue promoting for expansion 	Develop during 2013-2014 school year; Implement summer 2014 and ongoing
Strategy C: Increase student/parent/teacher career days and tours of businesses (Talent Tours).	Develop a variety of activities under the banner of Talent Tours in each sub-region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WDB's Education Advisory Group - ISDs - Businesses and industry cluster partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - K-12 school districts - Business associations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design/develop program, building on current activities - Market program - Find sponsors - Implement - Continue promoting for expansion 	Develop during 2013-2014 school year; Implement summer 2014 and ongoing
Strategy D: Utilize media networks/avenues for marketing career opportunities to students, parents and other adults.	Engage two or more media outlets to commit to ongoing (2 year commitments minimum each) to regional career opportunity marketing campaign.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WDB's Education Advisory Group - ISDs - Business associations - Industry cluster partnerships - Media outlets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - K-12 school districts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Build on current Career Spotlight activities - Greatly expand scope & reach - Develop matrix of materials and schedule for use by media - Engage use school newsletters & websites 	Develop during 2013; Implement in 2014 and ongoing

Goal 2: Improve the foundational skills of both the current and future work force.					
Strategy	Tactics	Primary Responsibility	Key Partner(s)	Essential Activities	Timing
Strategy A: Connect EDPs to career goals.	Promote the use of career goals in EDPs throughout all school districts in the region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WDB's Education Advisory Group - ISDs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - K-12 school districts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide rationale and examples/models - Promote widely - Implement in early-adopting schools - Continue to promote for expansion 	Develop during 2013-2014 school year; Implement summer 2014 and ongoing
Strategy B: Develop & deliver a refresher course for foundational skills for adults.	Establish one comprehensive, yet expedient, foundational skills course that is modularized and therefore customizable to the needs of individuals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Northwest Michigan Works - Adult Ed Learning Labs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specific employers - Industry cluster partnerships - Business associations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify existing curriculums such as Key Train - Select one/ more curriculum(s) and modify as needed - Implement regular schedule of offerings - Incorporate into PATH program - Incorporate as a strongly suggested activity for other customer s - Utilize internet-based approaches and distance learning to greatest degree possible 	Develop during Oct.-Dec. 2013; Implement 2014 and ongoing

Goal 3: Attract and retain more young adults for all kinds of professional and technical positions.					
Strategy	Tactics	Primary Responsibility	Key Partner(s)	Essential Activities	Timing
Strategy A: Develop a single point of information for recruitment and retention strategies.	Develop a Live/Work/Play website for the Northwest region, to include an intake/referral process for common use by all partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NWMCOG/ Northwest Michigan Works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human resources associations - Chambers of commerce - EDOs - Community Colleges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish common intake & referral process among partners for individuals looking to relocate to region - Research any existing platform(s) that would be appropriate for this purpose - Seek funding and sponsors - Establish and use a local design team, including young professionals - Contract with site developer 	Development process during 2014; Implement by end of 2014; Market aggressively through all partners
Strategy B: Develop Talent Co-ops for pooling of resources for industry-specific talent attraction.	Establish a methodology and support system for companies with similar talent needs to conduct joint marketing activities for talent attraction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Northwest Michigan Works - Human Resources Associations - Business associations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Businesses and industry cluster partnerships - Chambers of Commerce - EDOs - MEDC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify sector(s) for early adoption - Design with employers leading - Develop on-line infrastructure to support - Tie to talent recruitment site (Goal 3.A.) - Promote widely - Replicate 	Develop during 2014; Implement and replicate in 2015 and on-going

Strategy C: Promote quality of life in Northwest MI.; implement “attract back” activities for high school and college graduates of the region.	Sponsor at least 1 Live-Work-Play event in the region per year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NWMCOG/ Northwest Michigan Works - MEDC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chambers - EDOs - Colleges - MEDC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Apply to MEDC for funding - Develop a sub-regional calendar of annual L-W-P events - Tie events to other activities & highlights - Promote widely 	Begin in summer 2013; Continue on-going for at least 5 years
	Design and implement a marketing campaign to young adults who graduated from school in the region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ISDs - Northwest Michigan Works - EDOs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High schools - MEDC - Colleges - Business organizations - Family members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research any models currently in place via MEDC - Identify sponsors and funding - Engage the schools’ participation - Develop the implementation strategy 	Begin process in summer of 2014; Campaign in place by winter of 2015; On-going implementation for at least 3 years, depending upon funding
Strategy D: Develop a campaign to educate employers about factors that attract young people.	Tie this activity to the tactic for Goal 3, Strategy A, by including a component in the website designed specifically for employers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NWMCOG/ Northwest Michigan Works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human resources associations - Chambers of Commerce - Northwest Michigan Works - EDOs - Community Colleges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research any existing platform(s) that would be appropriate for this purpose - Seek funding and sponsors - Establish a local design team, including local companies - Contract with site developer 	Development process during 2014; Implement by end of 2014; Market aggressively through all partners on on-going basis
	Design and implement a marketing campaign to businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NWMCOG/ Northwest Michigan Works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EDOs - Media - One or more key 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify one or more marketing firm sponsors 	Begin process in fall 2013; Campaign in

		- Chambers of Commerce	marketing firms	- Seek funding for development - Develop a marketing campaign and implementation strategy	place by spring 2014; On-going implementation for at least 3 years
Goal 4: Increase diversity of job opportunities in the region.					
Strategy	Tactics	Primary Responsibility	Key Partner(s)	Essential Activities	Timing
Strategy A: Establish a system for “entrepreneurship apprenticeships” and entrepreneurship incubator(s).	Develop a model for entrepreneurship apprenticeship that encompasses curriculum with certification, work-based experience, and mentorship	- Northwest Michigan Works - NWMCOG/ SBTDC	- Colleges - Chambers of Commerce - SCORE - High schools - Businesses	- Research any existing models - Determine one or two pilot sites - Promote widely - Replicate in other locations	Design & development throughout 2014; Implement in 2015 and on-going, depending upon funding availability
	Develop at least one incubator location that supports entrepreneurial start-ups	- NWMCOG/ SBTDC - Business Atlas partnership	- Colleges - Chambers of Commerce - SCORE	- Verify currently identified location - Find sponsors for furnishings & technology - Develop fee schedule - Market widely	Design & development throughout 2014; Implement in 2015 and on-going, depending upon funding availability
Strategy B: Promote the telecommute economy and fiber infrastructure/high speed internet; develop telecommuting centers	Continue aggressive economic development activities to ensure technology infrastructure continues to grow	- NWMCOG - EDOs - Local govts.	- Businesses - Business associations - Chambers of Commerce	- Utilize CEDS as the supporting framework - Build on place-making activities	Immediate & on-going
	Utilize entrepreneurs' incubator center(s) as support locations for	- NWMCOG/ SBTDC - Business Atlas	- Colleges - Chambers of Commerce	- Verify currently identified location	Design & development throughout

	telecommuters (per Goal 4, Strategy A)	partnership	- SCORE	- Find sponsors for furnishings & technology - Develop fee schedule - Market widely	2014; Implement in 2015 and on-going, depending upon funding availability
Strategy C: Reinforce the essential connections among place-making, jobs, community vitality and economic prosperity.	Introduce and pursue Governor Snyder's Regional Reinvention initiative, including joint board meetings and future of greater consolidation	- NWMCOG/ Northwest Michigan Works/ Workforce Board - Governor's office	- Business organizations - Other units of government	- Introduce Governor Snyder's Regional Reinvention initiative - Begin holding regular joint board meetings - Submit application to state for Tier 2 status	Introduce at joint NWMCOG-WDB board meeting in August 2013; Fully implement with joint board schedules of 2014 and ongoing; Tier 2 application in Fall 2013
	Reorganize the agency into the model of a Regional Prosperity Council, per Governor Snyder's Regional Reinvention initiative	- NWMCOG/ Northwest Michigan Works/ Workforce Board - Governor's office	- Business organizations - Other units of government	- Conduct planning and implementation process for Tier 3 status	Submit Tier 3 application by Fall 2014
Strategy D: Promote multi-cultural events and foreign student opportunities	Establish marketing/ communications ties among sectors and organizations to increase awareness & promotion of multi-cultural events	- Colleges - Chambers of Commerce - Convention & Visitors Bureaus - Businesses	- DDAs - Arts & food organizations - Northwest Michigan Works	- Identify all relevant players and form steering group - Encourage media partners - Establish on-line connections - Promote widely	Start in fall 2013; ongoing
	Increase/replicate community college activities to bring foreign students to the	- NMC - WSCC - NCMC	- Businesses - Cities - Healthcare communities	- Encourage sharing of college approaches - Establish greater	Start in fall 2013; ongoing

	region		- Northwest Michigan Works	ties to local communities and businesses for foreign students	
Strategy E: Target wealthy visitors & residents for business attraction and social entrepreneurship	Establish a matrix of activities and connections that can identify wealthy visitors & residents	- EDOs - Convention & Visitors Bureaus	- Chambers of Commerce - NWMCOG/SBTDC - Colleges	- Identify group of interested parties and develop steering team - Identify concrete action steps and agreements	Plan and develop during fall 2013 through spring 2014; Implement spring 2014 and ongoing
	Develop an attraction/marketing brochure for distribution to visitors	- EDOs - Chambers of Commerce	- Mayors & village presidents - Visitor & Convention Bureaus - Airports - Lake associations - NWMCOG/SBTDC	- Determine content - Find sponsoring marketing company & printer - Develop companion on-line presence	Plan and develop during fall 2013 through spring 2014; Implement spring 2014 and ongoing

Appendix C: Strategic Agenda List of Activities

Northwest MI Strategic Agenda for Talent - Status Update

April, 2016

Goal 1: Increase occupational exposure and education at the high school and post-secondary levels, in ways that meet multiple learning styles, expose learners to real world jobs, and respond to employers' skill needs now and over the coming decade.

Strategy A: Increase work-based learning opportunities including internships, co-op, job shadowing, and apprenticeships

Activity	Partners	Description	
Work-based Learning Scholarships	Northwest Michigan Works! (NMW!) and Educational institutions	NMW! has committed its occupational training funds to scholarships for low-skilled, eligible participants to attend short-term training programs that incorporate a work-based learning component.	
OJT	NMW! And Employers	NMW! offers an incentive to employers to hire and train individuals who are lacking some of the necessary skills for the job.	
Apprenticeship	NMW!, Employers and educational institutions	NMW! can sponsor apprenticeships for any employer in any occupation. NMW! will manage the tracking and documentation requirements with the U.S. Department of Labor.	
Just-in-Time trainings	Colleges, NMW!	Intensive, short-term training program that teaches students the basics of an in-demand occupation. This foundation prepares them for further training on the job, based on the company's needs. Examples include Industrial Sewing, CNC, Construction Laborer.	
Fab Lab	North Central Michigan College (NCMC), Northern Lakes Economic Alliance (NLEA), Employers, Tribe, school districts	Mobile training facility for digital manufacturing. Travels to local companies and high schools to provide training as needed.	
Co-ops	All Career Tech programs and Local Employers	An opportunity to gain school credit while working in a local business and gaining experience in the workplace	
Required Internships for various college programs	Colleges	Internships are required for NMC's Business and Tech programs, and Baker College's programs.	
Work Experience Programs	NMW! And Local employers	WIA Youth, PATH, and Prisoner Reentry programs provide funding to support work experience and community service programs for participants. This offers a chance to experience a real work environment and apply soft skills.	

MAT2	Baker College of Cadillac, MEDC, NMW!, WMISD, Local Employers	Michigan Advanced Technician Training. This program will be offered in our region starting January, 2015 by Baker College of Cadillac. The program trains individuals in Mechatronics, a cross-functional and broad-based specialty. The program is unique in that it alternates periods of classroom training with training at a workplace. Employers sponsor participants by paying for their tuition and hiring them for work periods; graduates commit to working with that employer for a minimum of two years following the program.	

Goal 1: Increase occupational exposure and education at the high school and post-secondary levels, in ways that meet multiple learning styles, expose learners to real world jobs, and respond to employers' skill needs now and over the coming decade.

Strategy B: Provide educators with summer fellowships at local employers so they can contextualize subject matter to occupations.

Activity	Partners	Description	
Return to Industry program	NMC and Local Employers	Instructors work for a brief period at a local employer within their field, learning the latest industry trends, tools, and application of theory. NMC and the employer split the cost of wages.	
Adjunct Faculty	All colleges and Local Employers	Instructors are cultivated from leaders in the field.	
Career Jumpstart	NMW!, local school districts, Baker College of Cadillac	Promotion of in-demand occupations throughout the region, especially to high school students. Activities include Talent Tours of local businesses, presentations to high school classes and parent groups, and use of social media to "market" Hot Jobs. The program also assists with recruitment for MAT2.	

Goal 1: Increase occupational exposure and education at the high school and post-secondary levels, in ways that meet multiple learning styles, expose learners to real world jobs, and respond to employers' skill needs now and over the coming decade.

Strategy C: Increase teacher, student, parent career days

Activity	Partners	Description	
Talent Tours	NMW!, colleges, ISDs and school districts, employers	Tours of local businesses for youth to expose them to career fields. Includes Manufacturing Day.	
Career Expos	NMW!, chambers, colleges, school districts, employers	A business expo for students – businesses set up booths and students tour the expo asking questions about the industries and occupations represented.	

Summer Career camps	Various ISDs and school districts, colleges, employers	Summer programs for elementary, middle, and high school students to explore career fields. Examples include STEM, healthcare, robotics, and more.	

Goal 1: Increase occupational exposure and education at the high school and post-secondary levels, in ways that meet multiple learning styles, expose learners to real world jobs, and respond to employers' skill needs now and over the coming decade.

Strategy D: Utilize & leverage media networks/avenues for marketing career opportunities to students, parents and other adults.

Activity	Partners	Description	
Student Video contest	TDCC, NMW!, Networks Northwest, all ISDs, colleges, high schools, employers	A contest open to teams of high school students in the ten-county region. Teams create a video showcasing the career topic. In 2013-14, the topic was manufacturing careers. In 2014-15, the topic was STEM. Prizes go to first and second place winners – both the school and the team members receive a prize. This contest program has not been renewed for 2015-16.	
Career Spotlight	EAG, NMW!, Networks Northwest, all ISDs	A series that showcases careers in high demand industries, and highlights the ways in which knowledge economy skills are applied on the job. Careers explored thus far are healthcare, manufacturing, and information technology. The series includes a video, a web page, and a flyer.	

Goal 2: Improve the foundational skills of both the current and future workforce.

Strategy A: Connect EDPs to career goals

Activity	Partners	Description	
Regional ISD Strategic Plan	All ISDs	All ISDs in the region created a regional strategic plan that aligns with the workforce development board's strategic agenda. This plan includes emphasis on connecting students' EDP to career goals.	
EDP Project	All ISDs and several local school districts	Occupational exposure opportunities are built into the curriculum during 5 th , 8 th and 10 th grades, allowing the student, teacher, and counselor to create a meaningful EDP that connects to career goals. This project was a primary project of the Regional ISD Strategic Plan.	

Goal 2: Improve the foundational skills of both the current and future workforce.

Strategy B: Develop and deliver soft skills training in a variety of methods for young people and adults.

Activity	Partners	Description	
Soft Skills Videos	MEDC	A series of videos that teaches and tests “soft skills” such as teamwork, critical thinking, communication, and attitude. These are available to the general public on mitalent.org, and are used during work search activities for Michigan Works! clients.	
Jobs for Michigan’s Graduates (JMG)	NMW!, ISDs, school districts	A national program providing evidence-based curriculum in soft skills training for youth. The program teaches 37 competencies that focus on work ethic, attitude, financial literacy, and more. JMG classes are currently offered at the Beaver Island Lighthouse School, Wexford-Missaukee Career Tech Center, and Club 180.	
Club 180	NMW!, United Way, local employers	This program applies the JMG curriculum to out-of-school young people, especially targeting those without a GED.	
KeyTrain Career Skills Series	NMW!	A series of web-based training modules that teach career skills such as communication, accessing technology, analyzing information, and more. These modules are aligned with the National Career Readiness Certificate Plus.	
Work Experience Training	NMW!, Goodwill, SEEDS, Grow Benzie, other local employers	Training programs that integrate case management with instructor-led training. This design provides immediate feedback and correction for participants, increasing retention of both the occupational skill and the employability skill.	
National Career Readiness Certificate	ACT, NMW!, ISDs, Local Employers	The NCRC is a competency-based assessment that measures a person’s ability to apply academic principles in a work environment. The certificate is awarded based on scores from three WorkKeys tests: Applied Mathematics, Locating Information, and Reading for Information. Certificates come in Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum. The ACT website describes how certificate level matches skill level for hundreds of occupations.	

Goal 3: Attract and retain more young adults for all kinds of professional and technical positions.**Strategy A: Develop initiatives to attract and retain skilled workers.**

Activity	Partners	Description	
Wing Man program	TC Young Professionals, Traverse City Area Chamber of Commerce	A professional who is new to the area or considering employment opportunities in the area, can connect with a Young Professional. The YP will meet for coffee, happy hour, or at a family-friendly park to discuss what it's like to live in this region.	
Shifting Gears	MEDC, NMW!, Local employers	This program teaches seasoned professionals to "shift gears" and market themselves in a new way for a new job market. An example includes a dislocated C-level professional from a large corporation learns to apply his/her skills in a small business environment. The program includes an 80-hour pro bono internship at a local small business.	
Live-Work-Play web site	Networks Northwest, MyNorth Media, local EDOs	The immensely popular "MyNorth.com" web site has been designated the regional Live-Work-Play web site. The site is undergoing a few enhancements to include information on Living in Northwestern lower Michigan, as well as information on Working here. This initiative leverages the large customer base that already enjoys Playing here.	
TEC Scholarships	NMW!, all ISD career tech centers, colleges, employers	Scholarships to retain young Career Tech students in the region by connecting them to a local post-secondary program and a local employer.	

Goal 3: Attract and retain more young adults for all kinds of professional and technical positions.**Strategy B: Develop Talent Co-ops for pooling of resources for industry-specific talent attraction.**

Activity	Partners	Description	
No activity to date.			

Goal 3: Attract and retain more young adults for all kinds of professional and technical positions.

Strategy C: Promote quality of life in Northwest Michigan, specifically targeting individuals with prior connection to the area.

Activity	Partners	Description	
DreamJob	MEDC, Local employers	DreamJob is a job fair of immense scale. Recently held in Detroit, it was an effort to attract talent from out of state to move to Michigan and access the many job opportunities available here. Northwestern lower Michigan had a “quality of life” booth, showcasing our region as a great place to live.	
MichAgain	MEDC	A marketing effort targeted at former residents of Michigan who may be interested in returning for the right job opportunity. MEDC is able to market job opportunities from around the state to the database they have been building based on expos they have conducted around the country.	

Goal 3: Attract and retain more young adults for all kinds of professional and technical positions.

Strategy D: Educate employers about factors that attract young people.

Activity	Partners	Description	
ETC Workshop: Recruiting and Retaining Young Talent	NMW!, AlcoTec Wire, Grand Traverse Container, Benzie Area chamber of Commerce	The Employer Training Council (ETC) is a collaborative group of local employers and support organizations that offer periodic workshops on topics of interest to local small businesses. A recent workshop featured how to recruit and retain young talent. It boasted near record attendance. www.nwm.org/ETC	

Goal 4: Increase diversity of job opportunities in the region.

Strategy A: Establish a system for “entrepreneurship apprenticeships” and entrepreneurship incubator(s).

Activity	Partners	Description	
Business Development Centers at local colleges	SBDC, Baker College, NMC, NCMC, Networks Northwest	This activity is relatively “young.” SBDC is partnering with three colleges to bring greater entrepreneurship services to college students, particularly those in occupational fields that are growing and offer business development potential. There is much more potential in this arena.	

Goal 4: Increase diversity of job opportunities in the region.

Strategy B: Promote the telecommute economy and fiber infrastructure/high speed internet; develop telecommuting centers.

Activity	Partners	Description	
County-level broadband initiatives	Counties, EDOs, Networks Northwest	<i>Framework for our Future</i> Regional Prosperity Plan emphasizes the need for region-wide broadband. Several sub-regional or county-based initiatives are underway to expand broadband service for economic development.	

Goal 4: Increase diversity of job opportunities in the region.

Strategy C: Reinforce the essential connections among place-making, jobs, community vitality and economic prosperity.

Activity	Partners	Description	
Framework for Our Future	Networks Northwest, Traverse City Chamber, NLEA, AES, MLUI, NMWI, PRI, many more	A regional plan for Transportation, Energy, Growth & Investment, and Housing. The plan also incorporates symbiotic topics such as Talent, Health, Food Access, Recreation, and more. The plan and the strategies identified during the arduous public input process underscore the connections among quality of life, income stability, and overall prosperity.	
Regional Prosperity Initiative	Governor Snyder	A new means of supporting and incentivizing collaboration for efficiency and economic growth. Regions were defined through research on labor sheds, population density, and economies. All state programs are aligning with the regions; the Governor’s office is offering regional collaboration grants for voluntary alignment.	

Goal 4: Increase diversity of job opportunities in the region.**Strategy D: Promote multi-cultural events and foreign student opportunities.**

Activity	Partners	Description	
Chinese Exchange Partnerships	TCAPS, NMC	The program offers students a short-term or long-term exchange opportunity with a partner school in Dalian, China. NMC has entered into an agreement with a school in China for exchange of both students and instructors.	
International Affairs Forum	NMC, International Affairs Forum, Academic WorldQuest	Offers conferences, lecture series, and other events that explore global issues and raise awareness of the need for our region to embrace cultural diversity in an effort to succeed in a global economy.	
International Baccalaureate Programs	Local school districts	Several school districts throughout the region have begun to offer IB programs, which emphasize global mindedness, cultural exploration, and development of character traits that are valued throughout the world.	

Goal 4: Increase diversity of job opportunities in the region.**Strategy E: Target wealthy visitors & residents for business attraction and social entrepreneurship.**

Activity	Partners	Description	
No activity to date.		Please note: wealthy full-time and part-time residents are aggressively pursued for fundraising opportunities through colleges, hospital systems, and other major organizations. This ultimately leads to increased economic development. However, no targeted activity related to business attraction has been developed.	

Appendix D: CPR (Completion, Placement, Retention) Matrix

Our Universal Goal: *Connecting People to Opportunities...*

Shared
Program
Goals:

Completion

Placement

Retention

	WIA Adult		WIA DW		WIA Youth		Trade Act		ES		Business Services		Adult Ed		PATH	
	What we do	How we are measured	What we do	How we are measured	What we do	How we are measured	What we do	How we are measured	What we do	How we are measured	What we do	How we are measured	What we do	How we are measured	What we do	How we are measured
Completion	Training, Job search, resume, etc.	Credential Rate	Training, Job search, resume, etc.	Credential Rate	Goals, training	Credential or Diploma Rate	Training	Entered Training; Credential Rate	UIA requirements; job search	Numbers served; Services Provided	Recruitment	Jobs Posted; Unique Employers Served; New customers/1 st time services; Promotional Meetings	Training	Obtain GED or HSD; Increase EFL	Remove barriers; participation	WPR
Placement	Job	Entered Employment Rate; Average Earnings	Job	Entered Employment Rate; Average Earnings	Job or Training	Entered Employment Rate or Skill Attainment Rate	Job	Entered Employment Rate	Job	Entered Employment	Hire	Jobs Filled	Job or Training	Entered Employment or Training	Job	Employment Rate
Retention	Keep job	Employment Retention Rate	Keep job	Employment Retention Rate	Keep job or stay in school	Retention Rate	Keep job	Retention Rate	Keep job	Coming soon...	Maintain worker	OJT Retention; WIA Retention	Keep job or stay in school		Keep job	Coming soon...

Appendix E: Occupational Training Checklist and Occupational Training Agreement



PO Box 506
Traverse City MI 49685

Occupational Training Checklist

To do	Done	
		EMPLOYMENT GOAL (from In-Demand Occupation List) _____
		OCCUPATIONAL TRAINING GOAL _____
		1. Discuss previous attempts to find a job and verify that a resume has been entered into <i>Pure Michigan Talent Connect</i> .
		2. Conduct informational interview with _____ employers.
		3. Attend a Workshop at Michigan Works: _____ Date attended: _____
		4. Write a summary of why training is needed.
		5. Complete and submit college/training application to training provider.
		6. Submit High school transcripts or GED scores if required.
		7. Submit academic and financial aid transcripts from previous college if required.
		8. Complete Pell Grant application. Date applied/mailed: _____
		9. Schedule a college orientation if required.
		10. Conduct _____ informational interviews with someone in chosen training program.
		11. Secure dependable transportation.
		12. Secure appropriate housing.
		13. Arrange for child care.
		14. Provide Career Facilitator with a written statement of projected income while participating in training.
		15. Apply for Unemployment Insurance Seeking Work Waiver if applicable.
		16. Provide Career Facilitator with list of costs required for Training Program, including tuition, uniforms, tools, supplies, etc.
		17. Other: _____
		18. Other: _____
		19. Other: _____
Trade Act customers must also:		
		Sign completed <i>TAA Training Application (BWT-923)</i> for eligibility determination.
		Sign completed <i>Waiver of TAA Training Requirement (BWT-802)</i> , if applicable.
		Meet <i>Training Approval Standards for Trade Adjustment Assistance Training (BWT-312)</i> as follows: a. Suitable employment is not available. b. The worker would benefit from appropriate training. c. There is reasonable expectation of employment following completion of training. d. Training approved is reasonably available to the worker from either public or private sources. e. The worker has the basic skills, aptitudes and financial resources to undertake and complete training. f. Such training is suitable for the worker and available at a reasonable cost.

Participant Signature

Career Facilitator Signature

Printed/Typed Name

Printed/Typed Name

Date

Date

PO Box 506
Traverse City MI 49685-0506

Occupational Training Agreement

I have completed the requirements listed on the Occupational Training Checklist and understand that if I am in default on any educational loan I will be ineligible to receive Northwest Michigan Works! training funds. Students funded by programs other than the Trade Act agree to complete the Pell Grant application. The Pell Grant, Federal and State Aid, and any training benefits received as a result of a business closure will be applied to training costs first. Northwest Michigan Works! training funds will cover the balance of the costs. The actual amount of aid provided may vary based on the number and cost of courses approved by Northwest Michigan Works!

I understand that the funding provided for training is contingent upon the availability of state/federal funds allocated to Northwest Michigan Works! If these funds are reduced or eliminated, I understand the funding available for continued training after the current semester or quarter may be reduced or eliminated accordingly.

Participant Information

Participant Name	Date of Birth	Social Security (for Trade Act Only)	
Street Address	City	MI State	Zip Code
County	Phone	Email Address	

Training Information

Training Program	Training Site
Training Start Date	Estimated End Date

List of Required Tuition/Tools/Supplies (or attach description)	Estimated Costs
Total	

Internal Use Only

SCHOOL CODE _____

CIP CODE _____

CIP CODE EXTRA _____

DEGREE LEVEL
(NUMBER)_____**Training Funding Source**☐ ADULT☐ DISLOCATED WORKER☐ NEG _____

☐ YOUTH

☐ TRADE ACT, PETITION # _____

□ PATH

☐ OTHER _____**Verified by:**

Mileage Payment

One Round Trip per Day (to be determined by CRT Specialist)

Round Trip Miles to School _____ to Clinical (if applicable) _____

Signatures

Participant Signature

Date

Authorizing Signature

Date

Appendix F: Local Policy defining Youth Who Need Additional Assistance

Local Policy: Youth Who Needs Additional Assistance

Date: July 1, 2015

To: All Northwest Michigan Works! staff

From: Janie McNabb, Northwest Michigan Works! Chief Operating Officer

Subject: Local Policy defining locally-identified characteristics of a “Youth Who Needs Additional Assistance”

Programs Affected: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Youth

Applicable State and/or Federal Guidelines: WDASOM WIOA Manual

Funding Source(s): Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Youth

Background

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act allows local areas to provide services to non-eligible youth for up to 5% of their caseload, as long as they require additional assistance to succeed in their educational and employment goals. The local area must define “youth who needs additional assistance” in a manner that is in keeping with the needs of youth in the region.

The Northwest region’s assessment of youth who need additional assistance indicates five common barriers that are not addressed in the WIOA’s eligibility criteria. Those five barriers are used to set criteria for meeting the local definition.

This local policy provides the local area’s definition of “youth who needs additional assistance.” This definition is based on an assessment of ongoing needs of youth in our communities.

Youth who Needs Additional Assistance

Section	Policy Provision
Income	All youth who need additional assistance must first meet low income criteria as set by the Lower Living Standard Income Level.
In addition to meeting low income eligibility criteria, a youth who needs additional assistance may be eligible for WIOA Youth services if one of the following criteria is met:	
Language Barriers	Limited English speaking or cultural displacement
Disability	A documented physical or mental disability
Limited or no work history	Limited or no work history after completing high school or a GED
Limited school attendance	Missed significant time in school due to truancy, illness, family situation such as continual relocation, homelessness, caring for younger siblings, family emergency, or severe trauma within the family unit.
Loss of caregiver	Experiencing the loss of a primary caregiver due to death, divorce, incarceration, or extended military service
Addiction	Substance addiction and either participating or soon to enter a rehabilitation/recovery program.

Appendix G: Local Supportive Services Policy

Local Policy: Supportive Services

Date: July 1, 2015

To: All Northwest Michigan Works! staff

From: Janie McNabb, Northwest Michigan Works! Chief Operating Officer

Subject: Provision of Supportive Services to WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth, PATH, FAE&T, and Trade Act participants.

Programs Affected: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth, Partnership Accountability Training Hope (PATH), Food Assistance Employment and Training (FAE&T), and Trade Act

Applicable State and/or Federal Guidelines: WDASOM WIOA Manual; WDASOM PATH Manual; WDASOM Trade Act Manuals; PI 15-20

Funding Source(s): WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth, National Emergency Grants (NEGs) and National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWGs), PATH, FAE&T, and Trade Act.

Background

This policy provides guidance on the provision of supportive services for eligible program participants. Supportive services may be made available to those participants in need of additional assistance in order to secure employment, participate in a training program, and/or overcome barriers to full participation in allowable activities.

I. Providing Supportive Services

Section	Policy Provision
General	Supportive services are not entitlement payments and are provided at the discretion of Northwest Michigan Works! program staff, using the Policy Provisions herein and applicable state and federal regulations. Supportive services are provided based on individual circumstances; payment made on behalf of one participant may not necessarily be made on behalf of another.
	The Northwest Michigan Works! Chief Operating Officer may alter the availability of supportive services at any time during the program year at her discretion, based on funding levels and other priorities.
Need for Supportive Services	Program staff are responsible for verifying the participant's need for supportive services. Determination of this need should be based on whether the supportive service will assist in removing barriers to employment and/or training.
Documentation	The Career Facilitator/Advisor must document all supportive services provided in the participant's case notes and IEP/ISS. If the supportive service is related to training, then the Classroom Training Specialist will email the appropriate Career Facilitator/Advisor the necessary information in order for the Career Facilitator/Advisor to update the IEP/ISS accordingly.
	Case notes must also indicate what other sources/resources were considered and the reason they were not available. A supportive service should not be provided by WIOA if that service is readily available in a timely manner from another community agency or organization.

Available supportive services	<p>The following supportive services are available to be used as appropriate (see program specific policies for additional parameters):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eye exam and glasses • Transportation assistance, in the form of gas cards and/or bus passes • Clothing for interviews • Clothing and/or materials required for a specific job or training program, such as steel-toed boots, scrubs, etc. • Medical exams required for enrollment in a training program or for employment • Application fees • Insurance and registration for a vehicle to be used for work • Licensing, exam, and certification fees • Identification (driver's license, state ID, and birth certificates) <p>When determining appropriate supportive services, the Career Facilitator/Advisor must seek the lowest cost option available.</p> <p>Supportive services not listed above may be available upon request. The Career Facilitator/Advisor may request additional supportive services by sending an email to the Northwest Michigan Works! COO. The request must indicate the need for the supportive service.</p> <p>The Northwest Michigan Works! COO may update this list at any time based on requests.</p>
-------------------------------	---

II. Procedure for Providing Supportive Services

Section	Procedure
Vendors	<p>The Northwest Michigan Works! Inc. Accounting Department will work with program staff to establish vendor relationships in each community throughout the region. Vendors will be selected based on their ability to provide the goods or services most commonly needed by program participants, and who will agree to operate on a purchase order basis.</p>
	<p>The Purchasing and Records Associate will conduct all procurement activities and maintain a list of approved providers for a one-year period.</p>
	<p>In establishing such vendors, efforts will be made to distribute expenditures of supportive services funds throughout a community while also assuring that costs are reasonable in relation to the goods or services being provided. In addition, vendors will be treated courteously and paid promptly.</p>
	<p>Vendor relationships that operate on a purchase order or payment voucher basis are the preferred method for providing supportive services.</p>
Process	<p>The process for ordering supportive services will be consistent among all programs. Program staff must email the Purchasing and Records Associate (cc her/his immediate supervisor) a request that includes the following required information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of supportive service(s) – <i>be as detailed as possible</i> • Quantity and unit price (if applicable) • Maximum amount, not to exceed (if applicable) • Program/Funding source • Location where order should be delivered or if being picked-up • Date needed by. <p>The Purchasing and Records Associate will process only those requests that contain all of the required information listed above.</p>

Duration	Supportive services may be provided for while a participant is enrolled in WIOA Career Services, Training, and/or Follow-Up Services, PATH, FAE&T, and/or Trade Act as deemed necessary, appropriate, and in accordance with program specific guidelines.

III. Program Specific Guidelines

Section	Policy Provision
WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and NEG	<p>Each service center will maintain a secure supply of gas cards and bus passes, specifically for WIOA Adult and Dislocated Workers. All requests for providing gas cards and/or bus passes for individual participants must be approved by management staff, prior to distribution.</p> <p>Supportive services provided must be entered into the appropriate fields in the customer's record in OSMIS and in the case notes. Case notes are to be as specific as possible and are to include at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of supportive service(s) • Date provided • Amount • Gas card or bus pass number (if applicable) <p>If the supportive services are provided for career services, then the Career Facilitator/Advisor will enter the supportive services information into OSMIS.</p> <p>If the supportive service is related to training, then the Classroom Training Specialist will enter the supportive services information into OSMIS and the ITA Google Document.</p>

	<p>The following supportive services will not be provided under any circumstances for WIOA Adult and Dislocated Workers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer/laptop • Software • Vehicle purchase or repairs. <p>The Northwest Michigan Works! COO may update this list at any time based on requests.</p>
	<p><i>“Training costs”</i> is defined as those supports required for full participation in the training/class. Classroom training costs do not fall within the purview of this particular local policy.</p> <p><i>“Training supportive services”</i> is defined as those supports not required for participation in the training/class, but will assist the participant in overcoming barriers to participation. Classroom training supportive services does fall within the purview of this particular local policy.</p>
	<p>For Classroom Training in particular, vendor relationships that operate on a purchase order or payment voucher basis are the preferred method for providing supportive services. In cases where this is not applicable (i.e. mileage reimbursement) then direct customer reimbursement is acceptable. The Blended Training Coordinator must approve direct customer reimbursement before the supportive service is provided.</p>

WIOA Youth	<p>Supportive services provided must be entered into the appropriate fields in the customer's record in OSMIS and in the case notes. Case notes are to be as specific as possible and are to include at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of supportive services • Date provided • Amount • Gas card or bus pass number (if applicable) <p>The following supportive services may be provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation assistance, in the form of gas cards and/or bus passes • Clothing for interviews • Clothing and/or materials required for a specific job or training program, such as steel-toed boots, scrubs, etc. • Identification • Child care/dependent care assistance • Housing assistance • Educational testing • Reasonable accommodations for youth with disabilities. <p>Supportive services not listed may be available upon request to the Youth Program Coordinator.</p>
PATH	<p>Supportive services provided must be entered into the appropriate fields in the customer's record in OSMIS and in the case notes. Case notes are to be as specific as possible and are to include at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of supportive services • Date provided • Amount • Gas card or bus pass number (if applicable)

	<p>Available supportive services listed below are to be provided to participants on an individual basis. Lifetime or yearly limitations are also listed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Gas cards or bus passes, based on actual cost of travel or public transportation. ○ Start-up cost of obtaining insurance for an uninsured vehicle that is owned by the participant. • Vehicle repair <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Repairs to the automobile owned by the participant and that are necessary for participation. ○ Three estimates must be obtained and the work completed by a licensed mechanic. ○ Limit: \$900/year • Clothing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clothing necessary for interviewing or work. ○ Local “career closets” and thrift stores should be explored prior to purchasing new items. ○ Limit: \$500/year • Relocation allowance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Only to be used for participants who have obtained verifiable employment at a location outside commuting distance from their home. ○ Limit: \$1,500/year • Work-related expenses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Only for one-time, work-related expenses that are required to seek, obtain, and retain employment. ○ May include purchase of tools, professional license fees, and similar non-continuing expenses. <p>Additional guidance, restrictions, and policy provisions are included in the WDASOM PATH Manual.</p>

FAE&T	<p>Supportive services provided must be entered into the appropriate fields in the customer's record in OSMIS and in the case notes. Case notes are to be as specific as possible and are to include at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of supportive services • Date provided • Amount • Gas card or bus pass number (if applicable) <p>Up to \$80 per month for expenses directly related to participation in FAE&T activities is allowable in the form of gas cards. Other supportive services (up to \$80 per month) may be provided in lieu of a gas card if deemed necessary and appropriate by the Career Facilitator/Advisor.</p> <p>The following supportive services will not be provided under any circumstances for FAE&T participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicle purchase, insurance, and/or operator taxes (i.e. tags, title, license) • Computer/laptop • Living stipend • Student loans • Relocation expenses • Drug/alcohol counseling or therapy • Mental health treatment <p>The Northwest Michigan Works! COO may update this list at any time based on requests.</p>
-------	--

Trade Act	<p>Supportive services provided must be entered into the appropriate fields in the customer's record in OSMIS and in the case notes. Case notes are to be as specific as possible and are to include at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of supportive services • Date provided • Amount • Gas card or bus pass number (if applicable) <p>Individuals who are eligible and approved for training benefits under the Trade Act laws may receive supportive services as mandated by legislation. Trade Act staff will coordinate provision of these supportive services. The following supportive services may be provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation • Subsistence • Relocation expenses • Supplies • Equipment • Exams and certification fees <p>All supportive services must be related to training funded by the program and must be necessary to participate.</p> <p>Regulations and policy governing these services are provided in the Trade Act manuals respectively.</p>
-----------	---

Appendix H: Memorandum of Agreement regarding Adult Education collaboration

Agreement Number: 12-01

Memorandum of Agreement
Between

Northwest Michigan Council of Governments
P.O. Box 506
Traverse City, Michigan 49685-0506

And

Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District
P.O. Box 6020
Traverse City, MI 49685-6020

Purpose

This Memorandum of Agreement, hereinafter referred to as MOA, establishes terms and conditions between the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments, hereinafter referred to as NWMCOG and the Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District, hereinafter referred to as TBAISD. This MOA is entered into for the purposes of delineating the respective roles and responsibilities of the aforementioned entities for delivery of Adult Education and Literacy Services.

Effective Dates

This MOA is entered into July 1, 2012 and shall remain in effect until terminated by mutual agreement of the parties. It is dependent upon continuation of funding, acceptable performance, and desire by both parties to retain the partnership.

Terms of Agreement

Both parties agree to the following terms:

- NWMCOG operates Northwest Michigan Works!, Inc., a non-profit organization, under which all services specified in this MOA are delivered.
- NWMCOG maintains Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title II funding for Adult Education.
- TBAISD employs the Adult Education teachers and pays them out of Michigan State 107 funding designated for Adult Education.
- TBAISD will be the employer of record for the Adult Education teachers, with direct supervision from the Adult Education Coordinator, a Northwest Michigan Works!, Inc. employee.
- TBAISD maintains the Adult Education consortium of local school districts.
- Northwest Michigan Works!, Inc. will be the employer of record for the Adult Education aides and other non-teaching staff.
- Both parties will share in the hiring decisions for Adult Education teaching staff.

Roles of Partners

NWMCOG will:

- Provide staffing, as follows:
 - Adult Education Coordinator:
 - Supervision of Adult Education teachers, aides, and other non-teaching staff.
 - Development of instructional strategies and the program improvement plan.
 - Performance reviews of staff, according to TBAISD processes.
 - Completion of all mandated state reports as required by the 107 funding.
 - Aides for assistance in each location (FTE distribution to be determined by NWMCOG)
- Provide management of budget for full scope of Adult Education, including WIA Title I and Title II funding, State of Michigan 107 funding, and any other funds received for the operation of the Adult Education program.
- Facilitate the annual agreement and signatures of the local school district consortium.
- Provide marketing of Adult Education services for purposes of participant recruitment and community goodwill:
 - Development and implementation of marketing plan
 - Web site development and maintenance
 - Annual Report
 - Social media
 - Co-branding of Michigan Works! and TBAISD
- Provide:
 - Use of Northwest Michigan Works! Service Centers for Adult Education Learning Labs including utilities, phone, internet, parking, etc.
 - Technical support for technology needs in Learning Labs, including software selection, licensing, installation and maintenance, and computer functionality.
 - Integration of Adult Education services into Northwest Michigan Works! programs and services, where appropriate, and assimilation of Adult Education teachers into staffing communications and processes at service centers.
- Reimburse TBAISD for operating costs related to Adult Education that exceed the amount of State of Michigan 107 funding.

TBAISD will:

- Provide certified Michigan teachers as Adult Education teachers.
- Provide the Northwest Michigan Works! Inc. Accountant access to financial management systems for purposes of managing the full scope of the Adult Education budget.

- Provide the Adult Education Coordinator and Northwest Michigan Works! Inc. Accountant access to the Michigan Electronic Grant System (MEGS) for completing the State of Michigan 107 application.
- Submit Adult Education student counts in the Michigan Student Data System (MSDS) and provide Unique Identification Codes (UIC) for new Adult Education students.
- Issue high school diplomas for adult education students.
- Approval of the Master Course list and the adult education calendar by the TBAISD Board of Education.
- Audit adult education student count data.
- House and maintain adult education student records.
- Submit an invoice to NWMCOG, monthly, for operating costs related to Adult Education that exceed State of Michigan 107 funding.
- Provide regular communication to NWMCOG regarding availability and scope of State of Michigan 107 funding.
- Maintain the Adult Education High School completion program at the TBAISD Career Tech Center to be operated within all terms of this agreement.

Indemnification

The parties in the below Indemnification statement refers to the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments and Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District, with each organization being a separate entity.

The work performed by the parties shall be at the risk of the parties exclusively. To the fullest extent permitted by law, the parties shall indemnify, defend (at the parties' sole expense) and hold harmless the other parties (including its officers, employees and agents) from and against any and all claims for bodily injury, death or damage to property, demands, damages, actions, causes of action, suits, losses, judgments, obligations and any liabilities, costs and expenses (including but not limited to investigative and repair costs, attorneys' fees and costs, and consultants' fees and costs) which arise or are in any way connected with the work performed, materials furnished, or services provided under this Agreement by the parties or its agents. These indemnity and defense obligations shall apply to any acts or omissions, negligent or willful misconduct of the parties its employees or agents, whether active or passive. Said indemnity and defense obligations shall further apply, whether or not said claims arise out of the concurrent act, omission, or negligence of the other parties (its officers, employees and agents), whether active or passive. The parties shall not be obligated to indemnify and defend the other parties for claims found to be due to the sole negligence or willful misconduct of the other parties (including its officers, employees and agents).

The parties indemnification and defense obligations hereunder shall extend to claims occurring after this agreement is terminated as well as while it is in force, and shall continue until it is finally adjudicated that any and all actions against the other parties (including its officers,

employees and agents) for such matters which are indemnified hereunder are fully and finally barred by applicable laws.

Modification or Termination

This Memorandum of Agreement can be modified at any time by consent of both parties. Either party may terminate this Memorandum of Agreement for any reason with ninety (90) day formal notification to the other party.

Signatures & Dates

For NWMCOG:

Elaine Wood, CEO

Elaine Wood
Signature

6-29-12
Date Signed

For TBAISD:

Michael J. Hill, Superintendent

Michael J. Hill
Signature

6/19/12
Date Signed

Appendix I: Networks Northwest Board Vision and Mission



Networks Northwest

Talent / Business / Community

Our Vision

We envision a diverse and resilient economy in Northwest Michigan with vibrant, unique communities.

Our Mission

Our mission is to build stronger communities and enhance the quality of life in Northwest Michigan, by

- providing a regional framework for effective collaboration among integrated service networks;
and by
- directly providing services related to talent, business, and community development.

Our Hallmarks

- Public-private partnership
- Visionary leadership
- Responsiveness & adaptability
- Entrepreneurship
- Economy of scale
- Leveraging resources

Our Values

- Innovation
- Collaboration
- Integrity
- Excellence
- Optimism
- Empowerment
- Celebration

We Serve

- Businesses
- Community organizations
- Units of government
- Individuals
- Regional or sub-regional topical networks

Corresponding Goals, Strategies, Objectives, Metrics

- Regional Prosperity Planning and Community Networks
- Programs we operate
 - ◆ Talent
 - ◆ Business
 - ◆ Community

networksnorthwest.org

Appendix J: Local Policy on Priority of Service

Local Policy: Priority of Service for Training

Date: July 1, 2015

To: All Northwest Michigan Works! staff

From: Janie McNabb, Northwest Michigan Works! Chief Operating Officer

Subject: Priority Levels for providing Training Services to WIOA Adult participants

Programs Affected: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Adult

Applicable State and/or Federal Guidelines: WDASOM WIOA Manual

Funding Source(s): Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Adult

Background

WIOA law requires that priority for Training Services be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and/or individuals who are basic skills deficient. Michigan Works! Agencies may identify additional priority levels. Northwest Michigan Works! has determined additional priority levels based on the high need for skilled workers to fill jobs in Key-Demand Occupations.

Individualized Career Services may be provided to those who qualify based on the eligibility criteria listed on page 3 of 47 in chapter 3 of the WIOA manual. These criteria also provide the baseline of eligibility for training services.

This local policy provides the federal and locally defined levels of priority as well as guidance on how these priority levels should be applied.

I. Priority Levels

Section	Policy Provision
Level I	<p>Recipients of public assistance</p> <p>Low-income individuals: must meet one of the six definitions of “low income” provided by WIOA law</p> <p>Individuals who are basic skills deficient</p> <p><i>Veterans Priority of Service:</i> Veterans who meet this level’s criteria will be given priority within this level.</p>
Level II	<p>Unemployed individual</p> <p><i>Veterans Priority of Service:</i> Veterans who meet this level’s criteria will be given priority within this level.</p>
Level III	<p>Employed individual whose family income is below the locally defined Self-Sufficiency Level</p> <p><i>Veterans Priority of Service:</i> Veterans who meet this level’s criteria will be given priority within this level.</p>
Level IV	<p>Employed individual whose employer has determined that training will provide the skills necessary to retain employment or to have the potential to move up within the company (Incumbent Worker only – see Guidelines)</p>

II. Guidelines for Applying Priority Levels

Section	Policy Provision
When to apply priority levels	When the number of eligible participants who are seeking training exceeds the availability of funding for training, priority will be given in the order identified in this Local Policy.
Incumbent Worker Training	Priority Level IV applies only to Incumbent Worker Training programs. See Local Policy – Incumbent Worker Training.
Exceptions	The Northwest Michigan Works! Chief Operating Officer may grant exceptions to this policy on an individual basis. If seeking an exception for a participant, the Career Facilitator/Advisor must submit the request in writing (email is acceptable), providing rationale for the request.

Appendix K: Local Rapid Response Policy

Local Policy: Rapid Response

Date: July 1, 2015

To: All Northwest Michigan Works! staff

From: Janie McNabb, Northwest Michigan Works! Chief Operating Officer

Subject: Coordination of Rapid Response activities

Programs Affected: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Dislocated Workers

Applicable State and/or Federal Guidelines: WDASOM WIOA Manual; WDASOM Policy Issuance 06-12

Funding Source(s): Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Dislocated Worker

Background

WIOA law allows for Rapid Response services in order to identify, plan for, and respond to layoffs and dislocations of workers. Rapid Response allows for locally initiated activities that may prevent and/or minimize the impact of a mass layoff or closure in the community.

This local policy provides guidance on coordinating Rapid Response activities in order to address actual or potential dislocation events.

Process

Section	Policy Provision
General	<p>When a mass dislocation is expected, the Business Liaison notifies both Networks Northwest staff and the Workforce Development Agency-State of Michigan (WDASOM) WIOA Rapid Response staff.</p> <p>While in contact with the employer, attempts should be made to secure and document the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Company Name and contact information • Company Contact (name and title) • Description of the business, including North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) code • Type of dislocation (mass layoff or business closure) • Notification type (WARN, news article, letter, etc.) • Number of impacted workers and total workers at the facility • Brief description of impacted employee skill sets and corresponding occupations that can be linked to a Standardized Occupational Classification (SOC) code <p>Northwest Michigan Works! staff may provide the following services as Rapid Response activities, in conjunction with the WDASOM WIOA Rapid Response division:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial Rapid Response meeting • Worker Orientations • Joint Adjustment Committee • State Adjustment Grants • National Emergency Grants • Layoff Aversion • Incumbent Worker Training

Activities and Services

Section	Policy Provision
Incumbent Worker Training	<p>When Incumbent Worker Training funds via the state's Rapid Response Statewide Activities funding source are available, they will be used to avert layoffs and prevent the need for layoff and/or business closure.</p> <p>Northwest Michigan Works! Business Liaisons ascertain the need for training to upgrade the skills of incumbent workers in order to avoid layoffs. The need for training is identified via relationship with employers and partner agencies.</p> <p>If a mass dislocation is unavoidable, additional Rapid Response activities may be provided.</p>
Initial Rapid Response meeting	<p>Business Liaisons will coordinate an initial Rapid Response meeting with the company, union officers, Northwest Michigan Works! staff, WIOA Rapid Response staff, Unemployment Insurance Agency representative.</p> <p>The purpose of the meeting is to gather information regarding the layoff, timelines and other useful information such as the skill sets of the affected workers. The dissemination of information to assist both the business and workers through the transition to employment should also occur.</p>
Worker Orientations	<p>Northwest Michigan Works! staff will provide Worker Orientation sessions that describe employment and training services available to the affected workers, including services to special populations (Michigan Rehabilitation Services, Veterans' services and others).</p> <p>Northwest Michigan Works! staff are to deliver Rapid Response Dislocated Worker Survey at worker orientation sessions whenever possible.</p> <p>Individual appointments with affected workers may be scheduled in lieu of a group orientation, if necessary.</p>

Joint Adjustment Committee	<p>Business Liaisons may assist in the establishment of a Joint Adjustment Committee (JAC) if desired by both management and union officials, per WDASOM Policy Issuance 06-12. The JAC may devise and oversee an implementation strategy that respond to the reemployment needs of the workers and may be established at any point during the plant closing or downsizing process.</p> <p>The role of Northwest Michigan Works! in the establishment of a Joint Adjustment Committee will be to connect the employer with WDASOM staff for potential neutral chairperson assignment or funding.</p> <p>Northwest Michigan Works! will not act as the neutral chairperson, or will staff convene or select committee members. The function of the JAC will be led by the neutral chairperson and will not involve Northwest Michigan Works! staff members.</p>
State Adjustment Grants	<p>Networks Northwest will apply for State Adjustment Grants (SAG), if available, for additional resources to assist in providing Dislocated Worker services. Criteria that would necessitate application for a SAG include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full obligation, or expected obligation by the end of the program year, of Dislocated Worker formula funding • Mass layoff numbers that exceed the capacity of current staff to adequately provide Dislocated Worker services • Needs of the affected worker pool, such as basic literacy skills development, GED, and/or significant upgrades in skill level in order to obtain suitable employment. <p>Determination of the need for a SAG application, using the above criteria, will be made by Networks Northwest administrative staff.</p>
National Emergency Grants	<p>Networks Northwest will apply for National Emergency Grants (NEG), in conjunction with the WDASOM, if available, for additional resources to assist in providing Dislocated Worker services. Criteria governing the need for NEG application include the criteria listed above for SAG application, as well as ascertaining the state's ability to provide resources via SAG funding source.</p> <p>Determination of the need for a NEG application, using the above criteria, will be made jointly by Networks Northwest administrative staff and the region's WIOA Rapid Response Coordinator.</p>

Layoff Aversion	<p>Business Enhancement Teams (BET) are convened by Business Liaisons and are created to share resources for business retention and layoff aversion. Membership on BETs is sub-regional (generally covering two to three counties in the 10-county region) and include the following representation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local economic development organization leadership • Michigan Economic Development Corporation representatives • Small Business and Technology Development Center leadership • Procurement Technical Assistance Center leadership • Chamber of Commerce representatives • Other community partners with formalized stake in business retention. <p>Incumbent Worker Training will be used whenever funding is available and applicable as a layoff aversion strategy.</p>

Designated contact

Section	Policy Provision
Contact information	<p>The lead contact responsible for Rapid Response activities is:</p> <p>Janie McNabb, Chief Operating Officer Northwest Michigan Works! PO Box 506 Traverse City, MI 49685-0506 (231) 929-5058 janiemcnabb@networksnorthwest.org</p>