



Regional and Local Plans

Minnesota's Workforce Development System under WIOA

Program Years 2016 & 2017

Submitted by

RWDA: **Regional Workforce Development Area 2**
(Local Workforce Development Areas 3 & 4)

LWDA: **Local Workforce Development Area 4 – City of Duluth**

Department of Employment and Economic Development

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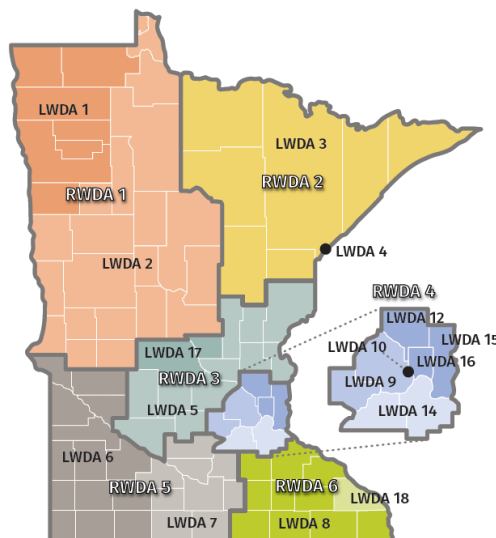
INTRODUCTION

The purposes of the WIOA are the following:

- (1) To increase, for individuals in the United States, particularly those individuals with barriers to employment, access to and opportunities for the employment, education, training and support services they need to succeed in the labor market.
- (2) To support the alignment of workforce investment, education and economic development systems in support of a comprehensive, accessible and high-quality workforce development system in the United States.
- (3) To improve the quality and labor market relevance of workforce investment, education and economic development efforts to provide America's workers with the skills and credentials necessary to secure and advance in employment with family-sustaining wages and to provide America's employers with the skilled workers the employers need to succeed in a global economy.
- (4) To promote improvement in the structure of and delivery of services through the United States workforce development system to better address the employment and skill needs of workers, jobseekers and employers.
- (5) To increase the prosperity of workers and employers in the United States, the economic growth of communities, regions and states and the global competitiveness of the United States.
- (6) For purposes of subtitle A and B of title I, to provide workforce investment activities, through statewide and local workforce development systems, that increase the employment, retention and earnings of participants, and increase attainment of recognized post-secondary credentials by participants, and as a result, improve the quality of the workforce, reduce welfare dependency, increase economic self-sufficiency, meet the skill requirements of employers and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the Nation.

Workforce Development Areas

Minnesota has designated six Regional Workforce Development Areas (RWDAs) in the state that represent a combination of Local Areas, as defined in WIOA, and Economic Development Regions, as defined in other federal law. These Workforce Development Areas have been approved and adopted by the Governor and the chief local elected officials of the Local Areas.



Each Regional Workforce Development Area is responsible for submitting a Regional Plan, inclusive of the Local Plans of the Local Workforce Development Areas. The Regional and Local Plans will align with the strategic vision set by the Governor, address the regional needs of the workforce and business communities and comply with the planning requirements as determined by the State of Minnesota's Department of Employment and Economic Development and the U.S. Department of Labor and applicable federal and state statutes.

Minnesota's Vision for the Workforce Development System

Vision Statement:

A healthy economy, where all Minnesotans have or are on a path to meaningful employment and a family sustaining wage, and all employers are able to fill jobs in demand.

This vision statement was developed through Minnesota's participation in the National Governor's Association's Policy Academy on Career Pathway Models. Minnesota's effort engaged seven state agencies and has influenced workforce development thinking at the system level. It is fitting to continue to move forward with pursuing the implementation of WIOA under this inclusive effort.

Mission:

The creation of a Career Pathway System that aligns local, state and federal resources, policies and services to meet the workforce needs of business and industry and improves access to employment, education and training services for Minnesota's current and future workforce.

Rationale:

The economic conditions of the 21st century require a more responsive approach to meeting the needs of business and industry; and the growing diversity of the workforce population. As economies become more global, competition will continue to increase and pressures on the inputs of production, specifically the timing, availability and skill base of the workforce. Rediscovering the value proposition of the Workforce Development System is critical to responding to the 21st century economy.

A Career Pathway System approach will position the needs of a skilled workforce at the center of the system, recognizing the important role of a "dual customer" approach – businesses and workers. Businesses will lead sector strategies that address the most critical growth needs in occupations that support family sustaining wages. The diverse needs of workers will impact the design and delivery of employment and training programs and services to fulfill these employment needs and their career goals.

SECTION A: REGIONAL PLAN

REGIONAL LEADERSHIP APPROACH

The regional leadership approach describes how the local area boards within each regional workforce development area will define and coordinate the strategic priorities established by the Governor under WIOA.

1. Describe the selection process for the membership who will provide the leadership to oversee the development and coordination of the regional plan.

Regional planning efforts in Northeast Minnesota will be facilitated by a leadership team comprised of 4-5 members from each Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) – 8 to 10 total members. Interested individuals will volunteer and be selected based on criteria that ensures broad representation from a variety of industries and occupations, including both private and public.

Both boards agree that a small leadership team will be more nimble and effective in the initial phases of development, but concur that others must be engaged at various stages to ensure those most affected by these efforts have an equal opportunity to provide input and actively participate. Additional recruitment will be undertaken as efforts develop and/or as ad hoc members are needed, including elected officials and key decision-makers from business and industry. Voting members of the leadership team will be current board members and each board will have an equal number of members represented.

2. Describe how the selected organizations from the region will provide oversight to development and implementation of the regional plan. Complete **Attachment A – Regional Oversight Committee**.

The regional leadership committee will meet at least quarterly, either in-person or by phone, to facilitate implementation of regional strategies. One representative from each local board will serve as a co-chair of the committee. Communication back to local boards will occur after each regional meeting so all members are informed of and connected to initiatives and projects as they develop.

The committee is charged with ensuring all regional strategies are clearly defined and measurable. They will guide decision-making and monitor progress of regional efforts to ensure progress is made and outcomes are achieved. The committee will engage key stakeholders, individuals from diverse groups, and those experiencing barriers throughout the process of development and implementation of regional strategies.

See Attachment A for membership listing.

3. Describe how the approach used will ensure that partner engagement includes diverse representation, specifically among populations experiencing barriers to employment.

Engagement of key stakeholders with diverse perspectives and experiences is critical to the success of regional planning efforts. The leadership team will reach out to and garner input from individuals and organizations, including those with the greatest barriers to employment. Intentional efforts will be made to connect with those who are experiencing barriers to employment, decision-makers from

organizations that serve individuals with barriers to employment, and other key stakeholders who can help identify and implement solutions. This includes, but is not limited to, representatives from communities of color, tribal communities, those involved with the criminal justice system, individuals with disabilities, K12, higher education, and organizations/associations specifically committed to addressing employment disparities. Efforts will be made to engage diverse groups early in the process to ensure strategies are reflective of their voices and ideals.

4. Describe how performance negotiations will be managed among the local workforce development areas within the region.

Any proposed method for negotiating performance measures among local workforce development areas within the region is currently on hold awaiting further clarification and guidance. It is important that performance measures consider those most in need of support, as existing measures make it difficult to do some of the things we're being asked to do. We are hopeful efforts will be made to propose modifications to the performance measures in order to deliver what we are being asked to deliver. We will continue to work with MWCA and DEED to develop a plan once final regulations have been released.

5. Describe any additional goals being set by the regional leadership or individual local area boards.

For the 2-year term of this regional plan, both boards have agreed to maintain primary focus on collective goals associated with developing sound career pathways approaches and addressing disparities. Any additional goals, developed locally or regionally, would likely be aligned with and support the collective goals and are yet to be determined.

6. Describe how the local area boards will direct system alignment within the region through shared policies and practices.

System alignment within the region will involve both internal and external partners.

Internal: Since the inception of the One-Stop system under WIA, Northeast and Duluth Workforce Center partner management has met monthly to discuss Center operations, determine and clarify policy, address staffing or programmatic issues, identify opportunities for collaboration, ensure appropriate access to Center programs and services, and provide updates on what is happening within each represented agency. These meetings already include local WIOA providers from both WSA 3 and 4 (the Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training and Duluth Workforce Development), DEED Job Service, Vocational Rehabilitation and State Services for the Blind management, and Arrowhead Economic and Opportunity Agency (AEOA), the largest Community Action program provider in the region and long-time partner in the Workforce Center system. Having this existing partnership between the two local areas has already helped streamline the regional planning process and is an effective means of aligning shared policies and practices among all system partners.

In addition to regular partner management meetings, Workforce Center Operations committees also meet monthly to promote and support internal alignment and include representatives from the front-line staff of each partner agency. These staff meet to ensure day-to-day operations run smoothly, including the development of agreed-

upon resource room staffing models, the availability of adequate resource materials, development of safety plans and other shared practices. Many shared policies and practices are already in place, including a common intake form for drop-in clients making inquiries. Others will be developed as needs and opportunities are identified, including the current effort to develop a unified training and procedure manual for customer service/reception staff.

External: In addition to having representatives from ABE, local MnSCU colleges, community based organizations and other external partners actively engaged on both local boards, additional points of alignment also exist, including participation in the Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce workforce committee, engagement in the Employment Table in Duluth, membership on the Iron Range Economic Alliance and Arrowhead Growth Alliance.

To facilitate further alignment between the Workforce Center and external partners, including higher education, Chambers of Commerce, community-based organizations, K-12 education, and others, the new Rural Workforce Coordinator (referred to as the Rural Career Counseling Coordinator in legislation) will direct an environmental scan and asset mapping initiative to establish a baseline from which work can begin. This process will identify all workforce development partners, their programs/resources, barriers, funding and opportunities – all of which will provide a foundation upon which increased alignment with public workforce development systems can be built. This information will be combined with existing data and/or the results of efforts already underway, such as the current College of St. Scholastica mapping project for individuals leaving incarceration.

To develop more consistent, streamlined and client-centered methods of referral and service delivery, efforts to promote development and utilization of common intake forms and other processes will continue.

7. Describe any cooperative service arrangements being planned for the region and how they will promote consistency within the regional workforce development area and with state policy.

Existing informal agreements between Workforce Center partners in the northeast region already work very effectively. For example, determination of which WIOA provider at the Duluth Workforce Center serves Duluth residents vs. non-Duluth residents is clear and referrals occur seamlessly: Duluth Workforce Development staff work with City of Duluth residents and NEMOJT staff work with non-Duluth residents. If situations arise that necessitate adjustments to the established process, partners simply maintain open lines of communication and adjust accordingly to ensure the needs of program participants are met.

Partners in the northeast region also work collaboratively on special projects and frequently facilitate cross-referrals and co-enrollments between agencies. For example, individuals served through WIOA programs may also co-enroll with Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS). Job counselors may promote program eligible participants to training opportunities available through another partner's special project (i.e. AEOA's non-traditional training for women).

A cooperative service agreement between the Office of Job Training and AEOA is currently in place that identifies a process to serve dislocated workers by either agency. Other cooperative service agreements will be developed with other system

partners over the development of career pathways initiatives.

Relationships and respect have developed over time and provide a firm foundation upon which Northeast Minnesota partners work to ensure consistency within the regional workforce development area and alignment with state policy. Additional formal cooperative service agreements will be developed as needed.

REGIONAL STRATEGIC PLANNING

The strategic planning component of the Regional Plan addresses three elements: strategic analytics, strategic approach and strategic operations. The overarching theme is to engage regional stakeholders in the process of establishing the strategic plan and to ensure that decisions are data driven and that the data can be used to measure gains and identify needs for improvement.

Strategic Analytics: *The assessment of the regional workforce development area focuses on key conditions. These conditions are detailed in the following response needs.*

8. Describe the condition of the regional economy and cite the sources of data and analysis.

The following comes from the Regional Profile for the Northeast Region assembled by DEED Labor Market Analyst Erik White:

INDUSTRY EMPLOYMENT

The Northeast region has seen several employment ups and downs over the past decade, but ended 2014 with 2,920 more jobs than it had in 2004. The region peaked in employment with 142,425 jobs in 2007, before suffering severe declines in 2009 and 2010. Since then, Northeast Minnesota has recovered more slowly than the state, which gained jobs at a 6.5 percent clip from 2010 to 2014, compared to a 3.0 percent increase in the region.

According to DEED's Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW) program, Northeast Minnesota was home to 8,638 business establishments providing 141,554 covered jobs through 2014, with a total payroll of just over \$5.7 billion. That was about 5.2 percent of total employment in the state of Minnesota. Average annual wages were \$40,508 in the region, which was about \$11,000 lower than the state's average annual wage.

St. Louis County is the largest employment center in the region with 96,302 jobs at 5,243 firms; followed by Itasca County and Carlton County with 15,980 and 13,669 jobs, respectively. Five of the 7 counties in the region added jobs since 2010, led by St. Louis, which gained 2,895 jobs and Carlton County, which added 971 jobs. In contrast, Aitkin and Koochiching County saw job declines since 2010. The city of Duluth has 59,647 jobs at 2,654 firms and has experienced a 2.4% increase of jobs in the past 5 years and a net gain of 666 jobs in the past year.

The Northeast region gained over 1,200 net new jobs in the past year, a 0.9 percent increase, which was slightly slower than the state overall. Six of the 7 counties added jobs from 2013 to 2014, again led by St. Louis County, and followed by Itasca and Carlton County.

With 32,805 jobs at 874 firms, healthcare and social assistance is the largest employing industry in the Northeast region, accounting for 23.2 percent of total jobs in the region. That is over 7 percent higher than the state's concentration of employment in the healthcare industry. The amount of jobs in this industry held stable recently, with only 150 jobs added since 2010 and about 30 jobs in the previous year. At \$43,680 in 2014, average annual wages were about \$3,000 higher in healthcare than all industries.

The next largest industries were retail trade and accommodation and food services. After seeing job gains in the past 5 years, these two industries made up nearly 23 percent of all the jobs in the region. However, the average annual wages were low in

these industries, with retail trade at \$23,348 and accommodation and food services at \$13,884, which were both considerably less than the average annual wage of \$40,508 for all industries in the region.

The construction and mining industries saw strong gains from 2010 to 2014 as they both grew by nearly 20 percent, and combined to add 1,800 jobs in the region. Wages are high in these industries, with annual average wages of \$57,392 and \$90,012 respectively. However, recent events have affected employment in the mining sector in Northeast Minnesota, as many mining workers have been idled.

Other important industries in Northeast Minnesota include educational services, public administration, manufacturing, finance and insurance, other services, professional and technical services, and administrative support and waste management services. Seventeen of the 20 main industries in the region added jobs since 2010, with huge gains in construction, mining, professional and technical services, other services, retail trade, and transportation and warehousing. In contrast, the region saw job declines in management of companies and arts, entertainment, and recreation.

INDUSTRY PROJECTIONS

As noted above, Northeast Minnesota's economy is projected to grow 3.8 percent from 2012 to 2022, a gain of 5,963 new jobs. The largest and fastest growing industry is expected to be healthcare and social assistance, which may account for over 80 percent of total projected growth in the region from 2012 to 2022. Other industries that are expected to grow in Northeast Minnesota include retail trade, accommodation and food services, construction, mining, professional and technical services, and administrative support and waste management services, which includes temporary staffing agencies. In contrast, the region is expected to see declines in information, manufacturing, transportation and warehousing, utilities, wholesale trade, and other services.

DISTINGUISHING INDUSTRIES

Northeast Minnesota stands out in the state for its higher concentrations of employment in mining and natural resources, and as measured by location quotient, its distinguishing industries reflect these particular industries. The region has more than 70 percent of the state's jobs in water transportation and mining. With trees as a natural resource in the region, forestry and logging and paper manufacturing are also distinguishing industries with location quotients above 4.0.

EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS

The Northeast Minnesota planning region is projected to grow 3.8 percent from 2012 to 2022, a gain of 5,963 new jobs. In addition, the region is also expected to need 45,000 replacement hires to fill jobs left vacant by retirements and other career changes. In fact, the number of replacement openings is expected to dwarf the number of new jobs created in every occupation group except Healthcare Practitioners, Healthcare Support, and Personal Care and Service, which are all projected to grow more than an additional 1,000 jobs each. Each of those occupational groups will have replacement needs as well, indicating the strong demand for these occupations in the region. The largest need for workers will be in food prep and serving, sales, and office and administrative support.

EMPLOYERS BY SIZE CLASS

The vast majority of businesses in Northeast Minnesota are small businesses, with 51.0 percent of businesses reporting 1 to 4 employees in 2013, according to County

Business Patterns from the U.S. Census Bureau. Another 35.6 percent had between 5 and 19 employees; and 11.2 percent had between 20 and 99 employees. Only 1.9 percent had 100 to 499 employees, though that was in line with the state. Just 15 businesses in the region had more than 500 employees, which is the Small Business Administration's official cut off for a "small business". Obviously then, small businesses are vital to the region's economy.

HOUSEHOLD INCOMES

Household incomes were significantly lower in Northeast Minnesota than the state. Median household incomes in the region ranged from \$41,617 in Aitkin County to \$53,016 in Carlton County, with St. Louis County residing in the middle with a \$46,517 median household income and the city of Duluth with a median household income of \$43,064. More than half (52.8%) of the households in the region had incomes below \$50,000 in 2013, compared to 42.4 percent statewide. About one-third of households earned between \$50,000 and \$100,000 in the region. In contrast, only 15.0 percent of households earned over \$100,000 per year, compared to nearly 25 percent of households statewide.

PER CAPITA INCOMES

Per capita incomes were also lower in the Northeast region than the state, with a more than \$5,000 difference. The region's per capita income was \$25,651, compared to \$30,913 in the state. Per capita incomes ranged from a low of \$24,079 in Itasca County to a high of \$32,868 in Cook County with the city of Duluth having a per capita income of \$24,926.

WAGES AND OCCUPATIONS

According to DEED's Occupational Employment Statistics program, the median hourly wage for all occupations in Region 3 was \$16.58 in the first quarter of 2015, which was in the middle of the six planning regions in the state. Northeast's median wage was about \$2.00 below the state's median hourly wage, and nearly \$4.00 below the median hourly wage in the 7-County Twin Cities metro area, which would amount to over \$8,000 per year for a full-time worker (see Table 8).

Lower paying jobs tend to have lower educational and training requirements such as food preparation, sales, personal care and service, and building and grounds cleaning and maintenance jobs. For the most part, the gap in pay between the region and the state is much lower for these type of jobs. For those occupations that have higher wages, the gap in pay is more pronounced. Computer and mathematical occupations make on average about \$8.00 less in Northeast than they do statewide. In contrast, construction and extraction occupations make on average slightly more in the Northeast region than they do statewide.

The highest paying jobs in the region are found in management, legal, architecture and engineering, computer, business and financial operations, healthcare practitioners, and life, physical, and social science occupations, which all need higher levels of education and experience, including many that require postsecondary training. The pay gaps between the region and state are much bigger in these jobs.

JOB VACANCY SURVEY

Employers in Northeast Minnesota reported 6,213 job vacancies in the second quarter of 2015, which was the third highest number ever recorded, and a 16 percent increase compared to 2014. Overall, 40 percent of the openings were part-time, and about one-third required postsecondary education or 1 or more years of experience. The median hourly wage offer was \$11.53.

OCCUPATIONS IN DEMAND

According to DEED's Occupations in Demand tool, about 250 occupations are showing relatively high demand in Northeast Minnesota, with training and education requirements ranging from short-term on-the-job training to postsecondary education to advanced degrees.

The in-demand occupations are spread across different sectors but are also concentrated in the region's major industries, especially in healthcare. Home Health Aides, Registered Nurses, Medical Assistants, Surgical Technologists, Physicians, and Pharmacists are occupations that are needed in the healthcare field and span education requirements. Construction, retail trade, and accommodation and food services are also industries that are creating significant demand for workers in the region.

A Note about Mining:

The mining industry in Northeast Minnesota is going through a downturn with more than 2,000 layoffs to those directly employed by the mines and thousands more in related support industries such as manufacturing, construction, and transportation. The impacts of these layoffs are great and far reaching and should not be diminished. For many towns in the region, mining supports the local economy, due to the high wages it offers, and has effects on the regional economy because of the other industries that rely on a steady production of this natural resource. Recent events, however, show a glimmer of optimism with rising ore prices, stricter enforcement of steel dumping, and announcements of idled mines to shortly re-open. Despite this particular sector of the regional economy's struggle, it should be noted that the overall regional economy of Northeast Minnesota has continued to grow and transformed since the recession, as evidenced by the record high employment in the region, wage growth experienced, and the tightening of the labor market.

9. Describe the condition of the regional workforce and cite the sources of data and analysis.

The following comes from the Regional Profile for the Northeast Region assembled by DEED Labor Market Analyst Erik White:

REGIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

POPULATION CHANGE, 2000-2014

Northeast Minnesota, also known as the Arrowhead region or Economic Development Region 3, includes a total of 7 counties. According to population data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Northeast was home to 326,649 people in 2014, accounting for 6.0 percent of the state's total population. From 2000 to 2014, Northeast increased its population by 4,576 residents. This 1.4 percent increase was considerably less than the 10.9 percent increase experienced across the state of Minnesota during this time frame.

With 200,949 people, St. Louis County is the largest county in the area, accounting for 61.5 percent of the region's population. Carlton County grew the most and the fastest in the region, with an increase of 12.3 percent, or 3,900 people. Itasca County also saw steady growth. On the other hand, Koochiching County lost 1,499 residents and Lake County lost 378 people, both losing population since 2000. The city of Duluth has 86,234 people and has experienced a decrease of 684 people since 2000.

POPULATION BY AGE GROUP, 2000-2013

Northeast Minnesota has a considerably older population than the state. Over one-third of the population in the region is 55 years of age or older, compared to just one-fourth of the state's population. In contrast, the percentage of population that is under 15 years of age is 3.3 percent lower in the region than it is for the state. Northeast also had a much lower percentage of people in the 25 to 54 year old age group, which is typically considered the "prime working years", at 35.6 percent compared to 40.2 percent statewide. Since 2000, the number of people aged 55 years and older – including the Baby Boom generation, people who were born between 1946 and 1964 – has increased by 25,440 people, and now consists of 111,245 people. It should be noted that the demographic composition for the city of Duluth is different than the region as a whole because of the large college aged population that is supported by area colleges and universities. 23.4% of the population in Duluth is 15-24 years old, compared to 13.3% for the state of Minnesota and 13.9% for the overall Northeast region.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS BY AGE GROUP, 2015-2035

Northeast Minnesotans projected to have relative population stability in the next 20 years. According to population projections from the Minnesota State Demographic Center, Northeast is expected to gain close to 5,000 people in the next 10 years, then lose about 5,000 people over the following 10 years. In comparison, the state of Minnesota is projected 10.8 percent growth from 2015 to 2035.

While the overall population is not expected to grow, older age cohorts in the region are projected to expand considerably. Northeast Minnesota is expected to add more than 36,500 people aged 65 years and older, a 53 percent increase by 2035. The results of the current Baby Boom generation moving through the population pyramid will cause the age cohorts of 45 to 64 to experience the greatest declines in population. The amount of children under 5 years old is expected to be unchanged, but school-aged children and young adults are expected to decline by about 8,500 people.

POPULATION BY RACE, 2013

Northeast Minnesota's population is considerably less diverse than the state of Minnesota, but has increased in diversity over time. In 2013, about 93 percent of the region's residents reported White alone as their race, compared to 85.6 percent of residents statewide. The region has a greater percentage of American Indian and Alaska Natives than the state, but considerably smaller percentages of people reporting Black or African American, Asian, or Hispanic or Latino origin.

Cook County had the most diverse populace in the region, with just 88 percent of residents reporting White alone as their race, while 7 percent of residents reported being American Indian or Alaska Native. In contrast, Aitkin and Koochiching Counties had more than 95 percent of their population reporting their race as White alone.

Duluth's population is less diverse than the state of Minnesota, but has increased in diversity over time. In 2013, about 90 percent of the city's residents reported White alone as their race, compared to 85.6 percent of residents statewide. The city of Duluth has a greater percentage of American Indian and Alaska Natives and people of Two or More Races than the state, but smaller percentages of people reporting Black or African American, Asian, or Hispanic or Latino origin. However, these groups have seen considerable increases in population in the last decade, while whites and American Indians saw a decrease.

In Duluth, the Black or African American population increased by 840 people since 2000, while the population reporting Two or More Races rose by 931 people. Together, those two race groups saw the fastest increases in the city over the past 14 years.

REGIONAL LABOR FORCE

LABOR FORCE CHANGE, 2000-2014

According to data from DEED's Local Area Unemployment Statistics program, Northeast had just over 163,000 workers in 2014. In the depths of the recession in 2009, the region's labor force reached its peak with nearly 170,000 workers, but has steadily declined as the recovery from the recession has taken hold. Even though the region's population has experienced a modest increase over the last decade, the labor force lost 2,747 workers since 2004. Northeast suffered the biggest loss in labor force for the planning regions in the state, with only the Southwest planning region also experiencing a loss since 2004.

LABOR FORCE PROJECTIONS, 2015-2025

Applying current labor force participation rates to future population projections creates labor force projections for the region. If the region's population grows at the projected rate, the region's labor force is expected to decrease significantly. Northeast Minnesota's workforce is expected to drop by nearly 10,000 workers by 2025, a 6.1 percent decrease.

The movement of Baby Boomers will result in an increase nearly of 3,000 workers who are 65 years and older in 2025. There is also expected to be an increase of about 1,450 workers who are 20 to 24 years old in the next 10 years. The largest loss of workers will occur in the 45 to 64 year old age cohort, as these Baby Boomers reach the retirement age and start exhibiting much lower labor force participation rates. This will likely lead to a tight labor market in the future as well, with employers needing to respond to the changing labor force availability in the region.

EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS, 2013

With just 61.2 percent of the population aged 16 years and over in the labor force, Northeast had considerably lower labor force participation rates than the state's 70.3 percent rate. Labor force participation rates were lower for all age cohorts in the region than the state.

The region also had lower participation rates for every race; and also had larger unemployment rate disparities for most minority groups when compared to Whites. The unemployment rate for Black or African Americans in the region was 26 percent, 18.5 percent for American Indians, and 23.7 percent for people of Two or More Races. Meanwhile, the unemployment rate for Whites was just 7.8 percent. In sum, unemployment rates were highest for young people, minorities, workers with disabilities, and people with lower educational attainment.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, 2005-2015

Northeast has consistently reported higher unemployment rates than Minnesota, typically hovering at least 1.0 percent above the state rate. According to Local Area Unemployment Statistics, the region's unemployment rate reached its peak in 2009 at 9.3 percent, then steadily declined to an annual rate of 5.4 percent in 2014. The region contains some of the highest county unemployment rates in the state, with Koochiching County and Itasca County reporting annual unemployment rates of 8.4 percent and 6.4 percent in 2014, respectively.

COMMUTE SHED AND LABOR SHED, 2013

According to commuting data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the vast majority – about 80 percent – of workers who live in the region also work within the region. However, Northeast is a net importer of labor, having slightly more jobs than available workers; drawing in workers from surrounding counties but also having residents drive outside the region to find work. In sum, 119,372 workers both lived and worked in the 7-county region, while another 29,939 workers drove into the region for work, compared to 28,830 who live in the region but drove to surrounding counties for work.

St. Louis County is the largest employment center in the region and was the biggest draw for workers, followed by Itasca, Carlton, Koochiching, Lake, and Cook counties. Employers in the region draw workers from Douglas County in Wisconsin as well as Pine County to the south of the region. In contrast, the region sends workers to the Twin Cities, represented by Hennepin and Ramsey County, as well as to Douglas County.

AN AGING WORKFORCE

Another factor that is significant to the condition of the regional workforce alluded to in the labor force projections above is our aging population. According to an article entitled, “*Older Employees in the Workforce - The Times They Have A-Changed,*” written by Labor Market Analyst Erik White (August 2015), workers to replace impending retirements is a significant concern. The article examines Quarterly Workforce Indicators and focuses just on the variable of Full Quarter Employment which measures the number of jobs that are held on both the first and last day of the quarter with the same employer. Using this methodology, we can determine the age of jobholders in the region. Since 2005, there has been an increase of about 13,000 jobs held by workers aged 55 years or older in Northeast Minnesota. This age cohort held about 16.5% of the total jobs in 2005, but now holds 24.3% of all jobs.

Using the same dataset and variable, we can identify the industries that have the greatest amount of and reliance on older workers in Northeast Minnesota. Education and Health Services – including schools, hospitals, nursing homes, clinics, and social assistance – have about 10,000 jobs that are held by older workers. Local government, mining, and professional and technical services are other industries that have large numbers and high percentages of jobs that are held by older workers. Further evidence that the regional Boards have selected appropriate sectors on which to base our first forays into systematic career pathways programming (healthcare and skilled construction trades, including mining).

Due to the age of the workforce in these industries, there will be a need to replace these workers as they reach the age of retirement, which could cause stress or limit the region’s potential growth. While attraction and retention of younger workers will be an important strategy, industries shouldn’t forget about continuing to work with those who are older.

Older workers are often seen as valuable to the workplace because they bring values of loyalty, reliability, productivity, as well as a wealth of experience and belief in a job well-done. Not to mention that you typically don’t need to tell them to put away their phones or that their appearance needs to be more professional. But there are other challenges that can affect the contributions of older workers.

In addition to the natural aging of the workforce, perhaps the most prominent change since the turn of the century is the advancement of technology and its role in the

workplace. Job duties have changed and new types of jobs have been created to incorporate the technology upgrades.

The advancement and prominence of technology in the workplace can be a barrier for older workers seeking employment even as older adults have increasingly embraced technology in their everyday life. For older workers, even finding out what jobs are available can be a burden as newspaper classifieds are no longer the main source for employment opportunities. Instead, most job banks are online and many applications are now done on a computer; and it might take much longer to hear back from the employer during the hiring process than in the past. Technological skills will need to be gained, especially for those who haven't worked for a while, but training can be hard to find.

RACIAL DISPARITIES

In another article by Labor Market Analyst Erik White (November 2015), illustrates the racial disparities evident in the regional economy. According to this article, U.S. Census Bureau data released last fall indicates widening racial disparities in Minnesota as a whole. The median household income for Black or African American Minnesotans fell more than \$4,500 to an estimate of \$27,000 in 2014, the only racial group to see their household income estimate drop during the past year. In comparison, household income for Whites increased more than \$2,000 from 2013 to 2014, to a median of \$64,000.

In contrast, according to DEED's Alternative Measures of Unemployment in Minnesota, the unemployment rate for Black or African Americans in Minnesota increased from 10.2 percent in September 2014 to 16.0 percent in September 2015. Meanwhile, the unemployment rate for Whites dropped to 2.8 percent, and the overall state unemployment rate fell to 3.8 percent.

Similar racial disparities can also be seen in Northeast Minnesota. Using the 2011-2013 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, data show that the Duluth-Superior Metropolitan Statistical Area –which includes St. Louis and Carlton counties in Minnesota and Douglas County in Wisconsin – had considerable differences in income and unemployment rates between the races.

Household incomes are lower in the Duluth MSA for all race categories than they are in Minnesota, but the income gap between whites and non-whites is substantial in the region. Whites had a median household income estimate of \$48,045, significantly higher than the average income of \$18,321 for Blacks in the Duluth MSA. The unemployment rate for Black or African American was more than three times that of the rate for Whites, 23.7 percent compared to 7.2 percent. Workers of Two or More Races had an unemployment rate 22.9 percent, and American Indians had a rate of 17.1 percent, indicating barriers to employment for the largest minority groups in the region. This speaks loud and clear to the need to always include themes of addressing racial disparities in all sector initiatives and programming in the Northeast region.

INITIATIVES RELATED TO EXAMINING CONDITION OF WORKFORCE

There are two important efforts occurring in the Northeast region that may shed further light on the condition of the current workforce. Firstly, the Blandin Foundation is currently implementing a study of unemployment in Itasca county, a county that has historically had a much higher unemployment rate than others in the region. The study seeks to understand the factors at play for individuals who are underemployed,

unemployed (short- and long-term), and individuals who are on public assistance.

One-on-one surveys will be conducted with people in varying stages of employment to identify several things, including:

- What 2 or 3 things are most important in a job
- Impressions of what jobs/fields seem like better places to work than others
- The top barriers to getting a job or getting a better job
- Whether they have accessed employment programs to assist their search
- Whether they made enough income over the preceding month to cover all expenses
- Opinions of what jobs in Itasca County pay a living wage in an effort to discern knowledge about the actual job market
- Whether respondents had or are participating in public assistance and whether this may be a barrier or a support to seeking work in effort to determine whether public benefits may actually prohibit participants from seeking work

The interview stage of this initiative is just getting underway with assistance from Workforce Center partners and other community groups. Workforce Center partner staff are helping to identify participants in a variety of employment situations along with working with Itasca County Health and Human Services to identify and encourage individuals on public assistance to participate. It has so far proven tricky to engage this particular population as they face significant issues regarding telephone access and transportation to participate face-to-face. However, we are confident this study will help shed some light on the impressions of the local labor force that could provide insight region-wide.

The other initiative involves APEX, the Arrowhead Partnership for Economic Expansion, a private economic development entity based in Duluth. APEX wishes to study the skill sets of the unemployed to better attract business development to the region. This has long been a desire of a number of regional economic development entities, including the IRRRB and the Arrowhead Growth Alliance, in order to understand the depth and breadth of talent available in the region. This information could be used in a number of ways in addition to business recruitment – there are significant training implications as well as providing existing employers with information on the workforce pipeline. Paula Reed, Duluth Local Workforce Development director, and Michelle Ufford, Northeast Local Workforce Development Area director, have both been involved in the development of this concept, which is currently in the beginning stages.

10. Describe the condition of the regional workforce development system and cite the sources of data and analysis (SWOT analysis).

The Northeast Region will be embarking on a regional asset mapping initiative in the coming months to be led by the regional leadership team, consisting of members from both boards. This initiative will seek to assess the condition of the regional workforce development system in order to more fully understand the address this particular question. This will be a contracted service using regional planning funds in concert with the new legislatively-funded Rural Career Counseling Coordinator.

According to this legislation (Minnesota Statute 116L.667), the charge of this individual is to make an accounting of workforce development and career counseling programs and services offered in the assigned workforce service area, and any

recommendations for changes to workforce development efforts in the workforce service area. This responsibility dovetails wonderfully with the notion of performing regional asset mapping.

Information acquired through the mapping process would directly support key components of this strategic plan:

- Broader business sector engagement – information that informs decisions and supports workforce development initiatives
- Increased community awareness of existing opportunities and services
- Coordination of resources and partnerships – development of a more seamless workforce development system that benefits businesses and job seekers
- Potential leveraging of financial resources to provide the region with workforce development services that meet the needs of employers and job seekers

By linking this effort to the regional strategic plan, efforts would be assessed annually and progress noted based on actions outlined in the plan.

Additionally, information gathered as part of the mapping would benefit far beyond the Workforce Boards. This effort would also:

- Increase general awareness of available programs and services for job seekers, service providers and employers in the community;
- Increase opportunities for collaboration between service providers
- Increase opportunities for collaboration between employers and the workforce system
- Ensure most efficient and effective use of financial resources
- Identify redundancies and open conversation about increased collaboration

Proposed next steps include:

- Articulate project purpose and timeline
- Engage stakeholders to establish buy-in
- Utilize the joint Board leadership committee to oversee the process
- Define project scope and mapping process
- Secure funding, including that made available for regional planning through the incentive award and NEG funding
- Develop RFQ
- Identify consultants and release RFP
- Review proposals
- Recommend selection to Workforce Development Boards and implement the process

Through this process, we will be able to more clearly assess the condition of the workforce development system and take action to address gaps and better coordinate efforts towards a career-pathways-oriented system.

11. Describe the regional workforce development area's vision for a skilled workforce.

For Region 2, the Workforce Boards of Duluth and the Northeast have adopted and built on the GWDB vision:

“An engaged and diverse workforce, where all Northeast Minnesotans, regardless of background, have or are on a path to meaningful employment and a family sustaining wage, and all employers are able to fill jobs in demand”.

Both boards acknowledge the importance of striving to achieve employment equity and will consistently address variances between populations in every regional and local workforce development effort. We seek to grow a diverse workforce with the right skills, knowledge and abilities to obtain and keep a job with family-supporting wages.

Strategic Approach: *The core areas of the strategic design focus on priorities of the Governor and the system of service delivery.*

Area 1 – Business Engagement

12. Describe how the region will use the labor market information and conduct outreach to business and industry to select the targeted sectors for developing career pathways for occupations in demand that provide family sustaining wages. If sectors and occupations have been already selected, describe them within this response. Complete **Attachment G – Local Workforce Development Area Key Industries in Regional Economy.**

Based upon real time and LMI data, Region 2 has selected healthcare and skilled construction trades as the first two sectors around which to build career pathway partnerships and initiatives. It is our intent to develop a model for building career pathways that can be honed through experience and applied to any sector. This includes identifying the career pathways, ladders and lattices within each sector and engaging service providers, training institutions, and employers within each sector in deliberate and meaningful ways. Employer engagement will focus on validating pathways and training opportunities, assisting in the development of training curriculum, engaging in experiential learning opportunities and work experience, and sharing their industry expertise.

Regional in-demand occupations are spread across different sectors but are also concentrated in the region’s major industries, especially in healthcare. Home Health Aides, Registered Nurses, Medical Assistants, Surgical Technologists, Physicians, and Pharmacists are occupations that are needed in the healthcare field and span education requirements. Construction, retail trade, and accommodation and food services are also industries that are creating significant demand for workers in the region. Of these industries, healthcare and construction/trades top the list of those that offer jobs that are in demand, clear career pathways, and family-sustaining wages.

With 32,805 jobs at 874 firms, healthcare and social assistance is the largest employing industry in the Northeast region, accounting for 23.2 percent of total jobs in the region. This is over 7 percent higher than the state’s concentration of employment in the healthcare industry. The amount of jobs in this industry held stable recently, with only 150 jobs added since 2010 and about 30 jobs in the previous year. At \$43,680 in 2014, average annual wages were about \$3,000 higher in healthcare than all industries.

The construction and mining industries saw strong gains from 2010 to 2014 as they both grew by nearly 20 percent, and combined to add 1,800 jobs in the region. Wages are high in these industries, with annual average wages of \$57,392 and \$90,012 respectively. Though recent events have affected employment specifically in

the mining sector in Northeast Minnesota as many mining workers have been idled, the industry is expected to make a full recovery. Skill requirements between the mining, supply chain, and construction industries often intersect, including the needs for skilled trade workers. Accounting for 4.5% of the region's total employment, wages in the construction and extraction occupations make slightly more in the Northeast region than statewide, where the per capita income is nearly \$5,000 less than statewide. The median hourly wage of occupations in this sector are \$25.65 compared to the region's average wage among all industries of \$16.58.

Outreach will be conducted using a combination of DEED BSS staff, LWDB members, WFC staff and service area Directors, as well as the new Rural Career Counseling Coordinator. Outreach will begin by identifying key employers within the healthcare and skilled construction trades sectors and convincing them of the benefits of participating in a career pathways system. This message will be clear and concise and help targeted employers understand:

- How participating will help the workforce system better meet their workforce needs;
- How they may gain access to a wider pool of qualified applicants;
- How they will be helping to make the northeast region a more economically competitive place;

Part of this process will be to clarify the roles of participating key employers, which may include:

- Determining which occupations within targeted industries and sectors should be included within the career pathways system;
- Vetting the set of foundational academic, work readiness, and technical skills, abilities, and knowledge that are chosen as required for key occupations;
- Vetting the certificates and credentials that are required for key occupations
- Collaborating with training institutions to design education and training programs;
- Participating as instructors or training sites in the skill training programs;
- Providing training funds for individuals through tuition reimbursement or class-size training projects;
- Participating in the skill certification/credentialing process;
- Serving as mentors;
- Serving as a job shadowing site;
- Providing paid or unpaid internship positions for students; and/or
- Hiring individuals who have obtained the required certificates and credentials.

13. Describe how the make-up of the sector partnerships will be determined and the expertise and resources they bring to the partnership.

Led by industry and using real time job data, sector partnerships developed under the purview of the region will include a variety of stakeholders, each with their own expertise and resources. The details of such resources are yet unknown as we are just embarking on this experience, but generally, decision makers from the below entities will be invited to participate in career pathways partnerships with the Boards in the following ways:

Employers:

- Develop curricula

- Provide trainers/faculty
- Provide training facilities and equipment
- Provide employment/internships

Workforce Agencies:

- Provide labor market information
- Engage employers
- Recruit and make referrals
- Provide support services
- Assess skills
- Provide job search assistance
- Provide job placement services

Educational Institutions

- Design programs
- Develop curricula
- “Chunk” and “modularize” curricula
- Create links between credit and non-credit based programs
- Promote portability through articulation agreements
- Provide support services
- Assist with financial aid

Economic Development Agencies:

- Provide real-time labor market information
- Engage employers

Human Service Agencies:

- Recruit and make referrals
- Provide support services

Community Based Organizations:

- Recruit and make referrals
- Engage employers
- Provide support services

14. Describe how the partnership(s) will work toward developing and implementing a career pathway sector strategy during the two years of this plan. If sectors and occupations have not been selected, address the process for these decisions within this response.

The two Boards will begin by ensuring we all have a common understanding on the definition of career pathways and work to develop a process/model that can be applied to any industry. A career pathways orientation presentation has been developed and will be delivered to both boards as well as other stakeholders who join the initiatives within healthcare and construction.

We are fortunate that Duluth has already embarked on the career pathways discussion, including establishment of a Career Pathways Committee in June 2015. Facilitated and led by the LWDB, the charge of the committee is to:

- Convene business and industry sector leaders, educators and community based organizations to identify and create sector-based, career pathway programs for skill development.

- Work to create a bridge between educational institutions, business and industry by identifying skills needs and communicating them to educational partners (career pathways).
- Support initiatives which increase the labor supply for high demand industries, both current and future, in cooperation with state and local economic development partners.
- Provide support to existing or emerging business/industry clusters, and to help generate and implement strategies that expand these types of business in the area.

Since its inception, the committee has established an employer-led working group focused on healthcare pathways and a small working group of employers from the hospitality industry. Key representatives on each include leadership from Lake Superior College, Adult Basic Education, ISD 709 Duluth Public Schools, local community-based organizations and workforce partners.

The Northeast Board will join this effort, learn from this work and apply their successes to leading career pathways discussion around the construction trades sector. Both boards will participate in the development of each of these sector initiatives, which will be overseen by the joint leadership committee which will include members of both boards.

Specifically, both boards will engage in the recommended steps of developing career pathway sector strategies in healthcare and construction trades in the effort to develop a suite of processes that can be applied to other industries in the future. Over the two years of this plan, these steps will include:

Engaging key employers within identified sectors, including:

- Analyze labor market information related to healthcare and construction trades to identify occupations within key subsectors
- Identify key employers within these sectors
- Recruit key employers to engage in the process
- Clarify roles of key employers
- Sustain and expand business partnerships (to target other industries)

Identify and develop training opportunities, including:

- Identify target populations and their “entry” points
- Review or develop competency models related to selected occupations
- Develop career ladders and lattices within subsectors
- Seek employer validation of competencies and pathways
- Work with local training institutions to design educational options that are progressive, modularized, accelerated, contextualized, and provide flexible scheduling
- Ensure programs lead to industry recognized and/or post-secondary stackable credentials
- Provide comprehensive wrap-around support services using community networks of providers who offer resources to address transportation and childcare needs
- Widely promote opportunities to obtain industry recognized credentials

Begin to identify funding resources to support career pathways programming, including:

- Identifying costs associated with system and program development and operations
- Determining the funds to be contributed by key partner agencies, and

- Securing funding from public agencies and private foundations and organizations.

However, the Boards of Region 2 would like to express concern over this last item, funding to support career pathways. A significant amount of work will be undertaken to develop these sector initiatives and appropriate state and federal funding resources must be made available to accomplish this work, complementary to funding that can be cobbled together using local resources. By concertedly engaging employers in this process, the implied promise is that there are resources to accomplish the implementation of this significantly new approach to workforce programming. As a system, we need to ensure that we can come through on this promise and be able to financially support new ways of providing training and education.

Area 2 – Community Engagement

15. Describe the process for identifying the characteristics, size and scope of populations not fully benefiting from the economic recovery, experiencing factors such as high unemployment, lack of credentialed skills and other barriers to employment.

The process for identifying the characteristics, size and scope of populations not fully benefitting from economic recovery will include:

- Review of the Blandin Foundation's study of unemployment in Itasca County which seeks to understand the factors at play for individuals who are underemployed, unemployed (short- and long-term), and individuals who are on public assistance. It will be a great source of insight into the needs of this population.
- Review of results from a survey of Duluth-based job seekers. While not statistically significant, the survey will provide insight into barriers to employment and other challenges from a qualitative perspective.
- Integration of questions as part of the mapping activity that can draw out information from service providers, including those serving opportunity youth, to better understand their client population (i.e. unemployment, educational attainment, participation in public assistance, etc.).
- Work with all counties in the region to identify the number of county residents on public assistance (MFIP, FSET, etc.).
- Connect with the State demographer's office.
- Review of corrections/judicial system demographics.
- Work with Vocational Rehabilitation Service and other partners to collect information on people with disabilities in the northeast region.
- Broad stakeholder engagement/dialogue with individuals not fully benefiting from the economic recovery and groups representing those directly affected.

16. Describe who will be included in the broad stakeholder engagement to address a targeted number of socio-economic issues faced by diverse populations.

Broad stakeholder engagement will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Existing and potential client populations, including low skill, low wage individuals
- Individuals not currently connected to services
- Disparity Project partners including AEOA and Community Action Duluth
- Chambers of Commerce

- Employers
- Economic development groups
- Education (Pre-K to Higher Ed)
- Government entities (corrections, social services)
- Local Elected Officials
- Unions/labor
- Parents/teachers/guidance counselors
- Community-based organizations
- Tribes

Some of the issues already identified for further discussion include:

- Pay and benefits (lots of low-paying jobs; low average pay compared to other regions)
- Barrier-specific (transportation, drug testing, child care, criminal background)
- Retraining skilled workers
- Matching workers with available jobs;
- Identifying true employer needs (soft and hard skills)
- Lack of workers with certain skill sets
- Opportunities to provide soft skills/professionalism/leadership development
- In-migration/recruitment opportunities
- Adequately promoting the career opportunities in region (including apprenticeships, entry- and advanced-level jobs, future industry needs, etc.)
- Adequately promoting the workforce development resources available in the region

17. Describe how this engagement will impact the development and implementation of the selected sector strategies during the first two years of this plan.

Because this is a new way of doing business in the public workforce development sector, the exact impacts are unknown. However, we hope to achieve the following outcomes:

- More partners will be involved with the public workforce system, engaged with various components of sector strategies, strengthening the system;
- Development of Career Pathways programming representing a more concerted and comprehensive approach to workforce development; and
- Increased engagement leading to the expansion of innovative and creative solutions to workforce development issues.
- Coordinated efforts that produce excellent outcomes for individuals and employers.

Area 3 – Customer Centered Design

18. Based on the regional/local assessment of workforce development system services, describe how strategies will be created to pursue a more responsive alignment of employment and training services, based on career pathway thinking.

The upcoming service/asset mapping exercise (see question 10) will assess the capacity of the employment and training system; the strengths, weaknesses, challenges and gaps within the region's workforce system to meet industry needs; and the wrap-around and support services available. All of this information will feed

into the process for creating career-pathway-based programming by identifying potential partners as well as areas where additional resources may need to be developed.

Though the exact details on how this process will specifically help to align employment and training services is unknown, strategies to align system services may include:

- Ensuring that all workforce system partners understand each other's specific goals, resources at their disposal, and their program performance measures and requirements, perhaps resulting in a one-page document on each organization's workforce program and services that can be catalogued and searchable online
- Making sure all partners understand the big picture and necessity of developing career pathways
- Identify better strategies of engaging system customers, including development of culturally adapted curriculum and services
- Clearly communicate expectations of each of the participating partners while also acknowledging the value of their contribution to workforce development/career pathways effort
- Among system partners, establish a shared vision and mission aligned with the common goals of the region

This will be the first step in determining ways of better aligning system resources. Participating in the mapping activity will also help to make ancillary organizations aware of the regional plan and opportunities to participate.

19. Describe how the entities responsible for participating in this process will be selected, including their expected roles and responsibilities.

As referenced in question 13, sector partnerships developed under the purview of the region will include a variety of stakeholders, each with their own expertise and resources. The details of such resources are yet unknown as we are just embarking on this experience, but in reality there are limited number of organizations within the region that are engaged in each of these partnership categories.

Using WFC staff and LWDB members to perform outreach, decision-makers from the below entities will be invited/selected to participate in career pathways partnerships with the Boards, with special consideration given to geographic representation:

Employers:

- Develop curricula
- Provide trainers/faculty
- Provide training facilities and equipment
- Provide employment/internships

Workforce Agencies:

- Provide labor market information
- Engage employers
- Recruit and make referrals
- Provide support services
- Assess skills
- Provide job search assistance
- Provide job placement services

Educational Institutions

- Design programs
- Develop curricula
- “Chunk” and “modularize” curricula
- Create links between credit and non-credit
- Promote portability through articulation agreements
- Provide support services
- Assist with financial aid

Economic Development Agencies:

- Provide real-time labor market information
- Engage employers

Human Service Agencies:

- Recruit and make referrals
- Provide support services

Community Based Organizations, including those working with disparate populations and individuals with barriers to employment:

- Recruit and make referrals
- Engage job seekers
- Provide support services

20. Describe how the outcomes will be determined in terms of employment and training services modeling career pathway thinking by the end of the two year plan.

Regional sector initiative leadership, including the Boards, employers and additional stakeholder organizations, will take these steps to measure system change and performance:

- Define desired system and program outcomes, including reducing disparities
- Determine how to measure system and program outcomes
- Decide on collection methods
- Establish how the data will be stored, tracked, and shared
- Analyze data, revisit desired outcomes, and assess progress.

Leaving room for developing related outcomes as these career pathways initiatives progress, initial outcomes and measurement of success at the end of this two year plan will include:

- Increased partnership and collaboration around strategies to address employment disparities.
- Well-developed career ladders and lattices in targeted sectors vetted with private sector;
- Deep understanding of career pathway systems & philosophy shared between workforce system and higher education;
- Comprehensive cataloguing of all regional training programs and providers and the specific credentials their programs award;
- Developed educational options that are culturally appropriate, progressive, modular, accelerated and contextualized, including short-, moderate- and long-term training options, that lead to industry-recognized and/or stackable credentials;

- Identification of entry points into career pathways, including corresponding certifications/credentials that lead to employment; and
- Completed pilots based on the identified sectors of healthcare and construction trades.
- Developed measures to determine whether or not career pathways models have met employer expectations and whether participant expectations were met as well.

SECTION B: LOCAL PLAN

Strategic Operations: *The core elements of strategic operations focuses on operating policies and procedures related to the one-stop system and physical locations of service delivery.*

1. Describe how local area boards will work with each other, core title providers and available data to designate at least one WorkForce Center per local workforce development area and make recommendations on recognizing affiliate and standalone partner sites.

In partnership with DEED and the MWCA, Local Workforce Development Boards in Planning Region #2 (NE MN & Duluth) will utilize recommendations from the WIOA One Stop Operations committee to guide the process for designation of at least one comprehensive One-Stop Workforce Center per local workforce development area, in addition to the recognition of affiliate and/or standalone partner sites.

Boards will utilize existing data and results of the mapping exercise to determine local need as related to the designation of affiliate and/or standalone partner sites.

Staff, with support from the regional leadership team, will maintain connectivity between NE and Duluth Workforce Board discussion and activity by maintaining frequent communication, sharing information and providing updates at monthly partner and board meetings.

2. Describe the strategies to ensure proper connectivity and coordination among the **physical sites** within the local workforce development area.

Partners in the Duluth Workforce Center maintain connectivity and coordination through monthly Partner, Operations, and Duluth Area Business Team (DABT) Committee meetings.

- Operations Committee meetings involve at least one staff member from each core partner organization and occur monthly. Committee members monitor overall operational effectiveness of the Workforce Center and discuss matters that include but are not limited to: flow, process, safety, continuous improvement, customer service, etc. They are also charged by management to fulfill certain responsibilities including documentation of procedures, supply ordering, and other tasks as assigned. Members of the committee all work directly with program participants and serve as the eyes, ears and voice of what is happening. They will often bring communication back to partner managers if they believe any action is needed.
- Partner Meetings involve management from each core partner organization and provide an opportunity to discuss items that impact all partners. Topics may include discussion of key issues, information-sharing about pertinent legislation and/or law, programmatic or funding updates, opportunities for collaboration, agency needs, cost-allocation-planning, policy review, and more. These meetings promote open dialogue among partners and facilitate positive working relationships across agencies. Partners also review Operations Committee reports and provide direction and/or feedback as needed.
- The Duluth Area Business Team (DABT) meets monthly and includes representatives from all Duluth Workforce Center partners (AEOA, Duluth

Workforce Development, NEMOJT, SSB, Veteran's Rep, Wagner Peyser, VRS) who work with employers. Discussion focuses on employment trends, recent successes and challenges, and forecasted needs of area employers. Meetings provide opportunities for collaboration and sharing of resources.

3. Describe the strategies to ensure proper connectivity and coordination among the **service providers** within the local workforce development area.

As indicated in #2, partners within the Duluth Workforce Center have established monthly meetings to ensure connectivity and coordination.

Strategies to promote connectivity and coordination among service providers who are within the local workforce development area, but not physically located in the Workforce Center include:

- 1) Inviting providers to participate on Duluth WDB committees;
- 2) Actively engaging in community convenings focused on key issues;
- 3) Utilizing the State digital communication platform (Gov Delivery) to inform service providers and interested community partners of opportunities and events.
- 4) Identifying collaborative opportunities for funding and connecting with potential partners;
- 5) Participating in events hosted by other service providers and organizations;
- 6) Facilitating information sharing – i.e. sharing notices of activities that could benefit the service provider or those they serve;
- 7) Hosting focus groups or forums to discuss key issues and gather input;
- 8) Visiting service providers worksites to better understand what they do and who they serve;
- 9) Mapping process – this will not only provide valuable information for local and regional planning, it may also promote increased collaboration and alignment between providers.

4. Describe other strategies that will be used to maximize services and access to services, such as non-traditional hours or using partner facilities.

Strategies to maximize services and access to services include but are not limited to:

- 1) Going into the community to meet people where they are most comfortable (i.e. neighborhood events);
- 2) Establishing temporary satellite locations for special projects;
- 3) Conducting workshops or training at locations in the community (i.e. libraries, community based organizations)
- 4) Providing services at local colleges and high schools (i.e. career centers, job fairs);
- 5) Considering extending hours of operation at Workforce Center (i.e. pilot staying open later 1-2 evenings per week; host evening workshops);
- 6) Utilizing social media and other technology;
- 7) Partnering with other organizations on special initiatives;
- 8) Working with local media to raise awareness of workforce programs, challenges and opportunities;

- 9) Continuing to work with the Northland Human Resource Association (NHRA). to facilitate partnerships with local HR professionals to benefit job seekers using services at the Duluth WFC.
- 10) Utilizing the local VISTA program to build capacity by facilitating outreach and education in the community;
- 11) Conducting hiring events at the Workforce Center to inform and engage the community.

5. Describe the strategic approaches to ensure all elements of Career Services are available at service locations or online, including services for youth and individuals with barriers to employment or service access.

Career services required under WIOA aren't significantly different than under WIA (*WIOA fundamentally merged core and intensive services into a single "career services" category and clarified that the law does not prescribe a sequence of services*) and Duluth staff recently utilized a WFC assessment tool developed by NEMOJT to compare core and intensive services currently provided at the Duluth WFC to career services requirements.

The assessment indicated that existing core and intensive services are already routinely provided to youth and adults, including those with barriers to employment. Additionally, multiple online tools for use by both businesses and individuals are available and career services are available in the Resource Room by accessing the appropriate content as identified by the computer interface, the Workforce Organizer. The Duluth Workforce Center has a staff member from DEED who works closely with the Department of Corrections to help job seekers who must address a criminal record in their job search process and who are having difficulty obtaining employment due to their barriers and criminal records.

The assessment also identified a small number of required career services not currently available and suggested strategies for providing these service are outlined below.

- Opportunities for advancement within in-demand occupations
Development of Career Pathways that articulate career ladders and lattices within in-demand sectors will fulfill this provision of career services. The Duluth WDB Career Pathways Committee intends to publish and/or electronically post information specific to healthcare pathways in 2016 and will then expand to develop pathways in other industry sectors. These employer-led efforts will result in useful information for job seekers, students, parents and the general community, increasing their understanding of how to access and advance within specific industry sectors.
- Assistance with establishing eligibility for non-WIOA financial aid programs:
Job counselors are accustomed to advising eligible clients on the breadth of financial aid available to supplement program funds; however, there is currently no formal mechanism at the Duluth WFC for advising the general public on these opportunities. Strategies to expand these offerings are already underway and include the following:
 - A) Duluth Workforce Development recently provided a letter of support for Lake Superior College's TRIO EOC (Educational Opportunity Center) application. If approved, EOC staff will spend 3 days per week at the Duluth WFC to

provide clients with information about completing the FAFSA, services to improve financial and economic literacy, college admissions, financial aid options, loan rehabilitation support, assistance with the post-secondary application process and more. Workforce Center staff are already familiar with the TRIO program and agree that many of their clients could benefit from the EOC program.

B) Duluth Workforce Development's Youth Employment Services (YES! Duluth) program is currently participating in a year-long capacity building program focused on youth financial capability through the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. As part of this initiative, YES! Duluth will have access to a variety of tools and resources – including those specific to financial aid - that can be made available for program participants and the general public.

- Financial Literacy Services:

While key components of financial literacy education are periodically delivered at the Duluth Workforce Center, they have not necessarily been comprehensive or available on a consistent basis. Staff most often utilize curriculum from one of the local financial institutions or the University of Minnesota Extension, but look forward to accessing additional resources through the efforts referenced above. Efforts will also be made to integrate financial literacy workshops into the monthly WFC training schedule by utilizing available resources and/or partnering with ABE or other community-based partners.

6. Describe strategies that will be used to leverage technology for services and ensure compliance with accessibility standards.

Because today's workforce is comprised of multiple generations of workers, our learning and language strategies must take into account their diverse needs, abilities, and preferences when it comes to learning materials and delivery. Technology not only makes this possible, it challenges us to become more responsive, flexible, mobile and agile. For this reason, we are committed to working toward the following both locally and in partnership with DEED:

- Creation of web-based learning options that leverage technology. Training methods based on video conferencing, webcasting, recording, localization and playback of training can increase access and are more cost-effective than standard face-to-face educational programs;
- Development of online program applications, timesheets, manuals and other materials;
- Expanded utilization of social tools such as discussion forms, blogs, video and mobile applications for learning and development.
- Increased use of social media to extend connectivity (LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter)
- Expanded computer literacy training for staff, program participants and the general public;

Additionally, we will ensure compliance with accessibility standards by:

- Providing assistive technology at the Workforce Center;
- Meeting established standards for IT accessibility, including access to local provider websites for all users.

7. Describe how supportive services, such as transportation and other needs, will be coordinated to better serve individuals with specific barriers to training, education and employment.

Integrated case management is an effective strategy for helping individuals navigate across systems to access a range of services. At the Workforce Center, individuals work closely with a single job counselor who helps them identify the services they need rather than multiple people each working to connect them with different resources.

Workforce Center partners coordinate with each other to avoid duplication and maximize services for program participants, but they also connect with the broader network of supportive service providers in the community. By doing this, providers can maximize resources and potentially serve populations who they may not otherwise reach.

To connect participants with needed support services, case managers must have a broad understanding of the services available in their community, including those provided by workforce system partners, community-based organizations, state or local agencies, and other organizations. The 2-1-1 Information and Referral program is available 24 hours/day, 365 days/year and is a valuable resource for case managers. Additionally, the planned mapping project will include an inventory of support services in the local area – information that will be extremely useful to all agencies who work directly with individuals experiencing significant barriers.

Development of Career Pathways facilitates collaboration and coordination of resources by engaging multiple program and partners. Each pathway involves workforce partners, employers, higher education, adult basic education, community-based organizations and others who work together to ensure individual progress. Each partner brings its own resources and supports that can be woven together to leverage available resources in a manner that provides exactly what the individual needs to be successful.

There are also opportunities to take advantage of other federal resources that individuals may be eligible to receive. This includes Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment & Training (SNAP E&T), the U.S. Department of Labor's Strengthening Working Families Initiatives, and the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF)—all of which can augment the funding offered through WIOA.

8. Describe how local area boards will ensure state policies on infrastructure funding requirements are adhered to and the process for addressing any discrepancies or disagreements.

The One Stop Operations Committee is working to combine the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Cost Allocation Plan (CAP) documents. Once state policies on infrastructure funding requirements are finalized, partners in the Duluth Workforce Center will develop a mutually agreed-upon MOU and CAP. Our approach to this process will build upon the strong and respectful relationships partners have established over time and our mutual commitment to developing agreements that are fair, equitable and supportive of our collective efforts.

9. Describe how local area boards, who contract out for provider services, will ensure that providers fully participate in infrastructure funding requirements and the alignment of service delivery within the local workforce development area.

N/A

10. Describe how the Memorandum of Understanding will be developed and used to ensure commitment of resources from service providers and required partners.

One-Stop partners in the Duluth Workforce Center will update the existing Memorandum Understanding based on the template developed by the WIOA One Stop Operating Committee. The MOU will accurately reflect the services to be provided by each partner and how they will be coordinated and delivered through the system.

Elements in the MOU will include but are not limited to:

- How the costs for services and operating costs will be funded including funding through cash and in-kind contributions, as well as infrastructure costs;
- Methods to ensure the needs of workers, youth and individuals with barriers to employment are addressed, including access to technology and materials made available through the One-Stop system;
- The duration of the MOU and the procedures for amending the MOU, including assurances that the MOU shall be reviewed at least every three years.

The Duluth WDB will review the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to ensure it clearly describes operations, services provided and coordinated, funding, and referrals. The Board will also ensure the MOU is reviewed every three years.

11. A. Describe the local area board's strategic vision and how it aligns with the designated state priorities under WIOA.

The Duluth Workforce Development Board (Duluth WDB) is committed to ensuring employers have access to a skilled workforce to fill available jobs and that all people, regardless of background, can achieve meaningful employment and a family sustaining wage.

The Duluth WDB spent most of this past year updating its strategic plan and view the strategic vision as being well aligned with the designated state priorities under WIOA, including development of a "Career Pathway System" that aligns with the needs of Minnesota's business and workforce. For example, in June 2015, that Duluth WDB established a local Career Pathways Committee to:

- Convene business and industry sector leaders, educators and community based organizations to identify and create sector-based, career pathway programs for skill development.
- Work to create a bridge between educational institutions, business and industry by identifying skills needs and communicating them to educational partners. (Career Pathways)
- Support initiatives which increase the labor supply for high demand industries, both current and future, in cooperation with state and local economic development partners.
- Provide support to existing or emerging business/industry clusters, and to

help generate and implement strategies that expand these types of business in the area.

Since its inception, the committee has established an employer-led working group focused on healthcare pathways and a small working group of employers from the hospitality industry. Key representatives on each include leadership from Lake Superior College, Adult Basic Education, ISD 709 Duluth Public Schools, local community-based organizations and workforce partners. Committee efforts continue to evolve and develop based on the Six Key Elements of Career Pathways.

Additionally, the Duluth WDB understands the complexities of workforce development and is acutely aware of how important stakeholder engagement is to identifying and implementing local strategies that will positively affect workforce equity issues and employment disparities. The Duluth WDB will reach out to and coordinate with local service providers and representatives from disparate communities to identify barriers and develop specific strategies that address barriers to success.

The alignment and coordination of local employment, education and training programs and providers is also an integral component of the Duluth WDB strategic vision. To facilitate this, the Duluth WDB will undertake a resource mapping process with support from the region's Rural Workforce Coordinator to assess the capacity of employment and training system; the strengths, weaknesses, challenges and gaps within the region's workforce system to meet industry needs; and the wrap-around and support services available. All of this information will feed into the process for creating career-pathway-based programming by identifying potential partners as well as where additional resources may need to be developed.

Results of the mapping will provide a foundation for discussing specific strategies for increasing coordination of services among agencies and identifying opportunities for leveraging financial and human resources. Additionally, the mapping will help local providers better understand what each public and private organization contributes to ensuring all people can achieve their career goals.

- B. Describe the local area board's goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment.

Duluth WDB goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce include:

- A) Working with employers to develop clearly defined pathways built on the six key elements of a career pathways approach and establishing systems to support them;
- B) Working with local education and training providers to increase the availability of and access to programs that effectively meet the needs of employers and job seekers;
- C) Increasing connectivity to the K12 system to engage youth in career exploration, work readiness training, soft skills development, exposure to career pathways, work experience and more while still in school;
- D) Developing new and strengthening existing relationships with local service providers to facilitate coordination, collaboration and a client-centered service delivery model;

- E) Partnering with local employers to facilitate exposure to in-demand occupations through work-based training programs (i.e. on-the-job training or internships), special events (i.e. Construct Tomorrow), or other activities that expose people, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment, to career options;
- F) Engaging with individuals experiencing barriers to employment, including at-risk youth, individuals with disabilities and those from disparate communities, to identify and implement strategies that will help them achieve their education and career goals.

- C. Describe how these goals relate to the performance accountability measures based on the primary indicators in order to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.

Overall Performance accountability measures are negotiated annually and will be developed after guidance from the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education is received. Local Workforce Development Area 4 – City of Duluth – will work with DEED and the MWCA (Minnesota Workforce Council Association) to develop measures that most accurately demonstrate the impact of Career Pathways and other strategies that address disparate impact populations.

Primary indicators outlined in WIOA are described in the section below:

WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs

1. Initial Employment Indicator - The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program. *This indicator shows the percentage of individuals exiting a career pathway who are employed in the second calendar quarter after leaving the pathway.*
2. Subsequent employment retention - The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program. *This indicator shows the percentage of individuals still employed in the fourth calendar quarter after leaving the career pathway.*
3. Initial Earnings - The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program. *This indicator shows the median quarterly earnings of individuals exiting a career pathway who are employed in the second calendar quarter after leaving the pathway.*
4. The indicators of effectiveness in serving employers – There is no specific metric for this yet.
5. Credential Attainment - The percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (subject to clause 4 (iii)), during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program. *This includes the attainment of: a high school diploma or equivalence; pathway license, industry certification, or apprenticeship certificate; pathway certificate and diploma; or pathway associate degree attainment.*

6. Skill Gain - The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment. *This indicator is used to demonstrate measurable skill gain.*

These indicators align with a career pathways system approach, correlate with Duluth WDB goals outlined in the previous section, and reflect identified strategies for preparing an educated and skilled workforce.

WIOA Youth & Young Adult Program

The Youth and Young Adult indicators are similar to those for the Adult and Dislocated Worker programs, but with greater emphasis on educational development and credential attainment. These also align with a career pathways system approach, correlate with Duluth WDB goals outlined in the previous section, and reflect identified strategies for preparing an educated and skilled workforce.

1. Entered Employment, Education or Training – The percentage of program participants who are in education or training services, or in unsubsidized employment during second quarter after exit.
2. Retention – The percentage of program participants who are in education or training services, or in unsubsidized employment during fourth quarter after exit.
3. Initial Earnings – The median earnings of participants in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit
4. Credential Attainment – The percentage of participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, secondary school diploma or equivalent during participation or within 1 year after program exit
5. Progress Toward Goals – The percentage of participants who during a program year are in education that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable gains toward those goals.
6. The indicators of effectiveness in serving employers.

- D. Describe the strategy to work with the entities that carry out the core programs to align resources available to the local workforce development area, to achieve the strategic vision and goals of the local area board.

- Core program partners sign Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs).
- Partners communicate regularly to ensure resources in the local workforce development area are coordinated and leveraged to achieve maximum impact and support the vision and goals of the local workforce development board.
- Monthly partner meetings, membership on the local board, or involvement on committees facilitate information-sharing and keep partners informed of new and emerging initiatives, funding streams, and opportunities for collaboration and alignment.
- Reemployment Eligibility Assessment (REA) activities bring individuals receiving unemployment insurance benefits into the Workforce Center for

personalized assessments and referrals to reemployment services. The goal of REA is to provide unemployed workers with early access to specific strategies that can help get them back into the workforce faster.

- Staff have a strong understanding of how different funding sources can be leveraged for specific purposes and utilize this strategy frequently. It is not uncommon for staff to braid funding to pay for all of the services needed by a given individual.
- Workforce Center partners work with individuals and organizations in the community to maintain connectivity and facilitate alignment of resources. This is often accomplished through participation on boards and committees, engaging in community conversations, partnering on grant proposals, and other activities.

12. Describe how the local workforce development system will work with entities carrying out core programs to align and support services with programs of study authorized under Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act.

Two members of the Duluth Workforce Development Board (Duluth WDB) are actively involved in our region's Carl Perkins Consortium: Mike Seymour, Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs at Lake Superior College and Brad Vieths, Vocational Programs Coordinator for Duluth Public Schools and Secondary Coordinator for the Carl Perkins Lake Superior Consortium at ISD 709. Both Mike and Brad are active members of the Duluth WDB Career Pathways Committee and Brad has also joined the Health Care and Hospitality subcommittees and Youth/Education Committee. These committees all utilize the Minnesota Career Cluster diagram as a guiding tool for developing career pathways

Additionally, representatives from Local Workforce Development Area #4 will participate in the upcoming *Pathways to Postsecondary Summit* to assist in establishing and strengthening partnerships among all technical education entities. The summit is funded under the Carl D. Perkins Career Technical Education grant from the US Department of Education and is intended to expand Minnesota State Colleges and Universities' (MnSCU) ability to partner with Adult Basic Education (ABE) providers, workforce development, and community-based organizations to expand opportunities for students to access postsecondary credit-bearing pathways.

Perkins' funding has also supported Duluth's Construct Tomorrow event in each of the past two years and was instrumental in expanding the 2016 event to two full days. Day one engaged more than 1,500 sophomore students from Duluth and day two drew an additional 400+ students from surrounding districts.

Duluth Workforce Development is also working with ISD 709 to develop - with grant and potential Perkins' support – "Career Counselor" positions that would be shared between the two organizations. These positions would be housed in the local high school career centers with direction provided jointly by the Vocational Programs Coordinator and Workforce Development Manager.

13. A. Describe how the local area board, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment opportunities for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment.

A variety of strategies will be implemented to expand access to employment opportunities for eligible individuals, particularly those with barriers to employment. The most significant of these will be development and expansion of career pathways, which includes identification of career ladders and lattices within key sector. Because a basic lack of information regarding how one can access career opportunities often prevents individuals from preparing for and entering the workforce, a Career Pathways system will provide individuals with better information about available in-demand occupations and how they can gain access to them.

As the elements of career pathways are developed, information will be shared in a variety of formats (print form and electronically via social media and provider websites) through new and existing networks, including Workforce Center job counselors, key stakeholder groups, local educators, community-based organizations and others. Information will include the progression of occupations within a career pathway, entry and exit points into corresponding training, the kinds of employers who hire individuals along a pathway, wages and progressive earning potential, and opportunities to learn more about careers along a pathway. Because these efforts will be led by the local Board, where all core partner programs are represented, coordinating efforts to expand access to employment for eligible individuals, particularly those with barriers to employment, can be accomplished.

Each core program partner also plays a unique role in expanding access to employment for individuals with barriers to employment.

Duluth Workforce Development (DWD): As the administrator of WIOA programs in Local Workforce Development Area 4 (City of Duluth), DWD will explore new methods for increasing enrollment in dislocated worker, adult and youth programming, specifically for those with a range of barriers to employment.

The youth program is already making significant efforts to engage out of school youth (a population with a high incidence of barriers) and connect them with employment and training opportunities. The adult program has income-eligibility guidelines for enrollment and incorporates strategies for addressing employment barriers into the case management process because they are serving individuals with a wide range of barriers to employment. DWD has also partnered with local partners, including SOAR, ABE and Lake Superior College, on a number of FastTRAC programs developed specifically for those with barriers to employment. DWD and its partners will expand these efforts through career pathways under WIOA and the State's Pathways to Prosperity program.

To better understand the local landscape and initiate discussion around how to expand access to employment opportunities, particularly for those with significant barriers, the Duluth Workforce Development Board recently conducted a small-scale, employer engagement survey to learn about hiring difficulties and diversity in the workplace. While results from this survey are helpful from a qualitative perspective, they are not scientific or scalable to a community level since it was not a representative sample. Results of employer survey data from DEED will be released soon and provide a more scientific sample.

The purpose of the survey was to a) increase board understanding of local workforce

diversity in order to help bridge the gap between job seekers and employers, specifically for underrepresented populations and b) identify hiring challenges facing employers so that strategies can be developed to address them. Results from a soon-to-be conducted job-seeker survey will be cross-referenced with all employer survey results so the board can identify local barriers to success and recommended strategies for addressing them.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS): The mission of Vocational Rehabilitation Services is to empower Minnesotans with disabilities to achieve their goals for employment, independent living and community integration. Employment for those with disabilities will be in integrated, competitive positions in the community, at or above minimum wage. Wages are not less than that customarily paid by the employer for the same or similar work performed by non-disabled individuals. All of the individuals that VRS serve have at least disability related barriers to employment. In addition, many of those individuals are from diverse racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, as well as individuals with criminal histories. Barriers related to poverty are common as well. Vocational Rehabilitation Services are expanding services to transition aged youth, in the areas of job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or post-secondary educational programs at institutions of higher education, workplace readiness training, and instruction in self-advocacy.

Job Service: Job Service /Wagner Peyser staff will coordinate with Unemployment Insurance staff delivering Reemployment Assistance sessions to increase awareness of Workforce Center programs and services to individuals seemed most likely to exhaust benefits. These sessions, held multiple times per week in the Duluth WorkForce Center, reach individuals seeking employment and/or training. In addition to serving those on unemployment insurance, Job Service staff serve veterans and those not enrolled in eligibility based programs. Veterans with barriers to employment are case managed by the Disabled Veteran Outreach Program staff to find appropriate employment. The Senior Veteran Employment Representative, a new hire for our region, works with regional businesses to promote veteran employment as well as monitor, report on, and ensure that performance standards are met or exceeded as specified in the Jobs for Veterans State Grant.

State Services for the Blind (SSB): SSB's Workforce Development staff provide counseling, training, job skills, and placement services for individuals who are blind, visually impaired, DeafBlind, or experiencing vision loss and looking for work. SSB also assists employers with pre-employment services, connecting future employees with companies through internships, mentoring opportunities and training that is customized to the business need or delivered on the job. The Workforce Center also has assistive and adaptive technology readily available for those who need it.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services: The Duluth Workforce Center utilizes State Relay and Interpreter Services (711) to assist those who are deaf or hard of hearing. The NE Region Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services office is also located in Duluth, just a few blocks from the Duluth Workforce Center.

- B. Describe how the local area board, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment.

To expand access to supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly those

with barriers to employment, the local area board will work with entities carrying out core programs to ensure effective systems are in place to effectively meet the needs of individuals entering the public workforce system.

The local board, in consultation with the One-Stop partners, has developed and approved a policy on supportive services that ensures resource and service coordination in the local area. Supportive services such as transportation, child care and dependent care, housing, and needs-related payments are necessary to enable an individual to participate in activities authorized and consistent with the provisions of WIOA. The provision of supportive services is documented in the participant's IEP (Individual Employment Plan).

Core partners expand access to supportive services by conducting an initial assessment to identify an individual's skill levels (including literacy, numeracy and English language proficiency) and aptitudes and abilities (including skills gaps). This assessment provides information that allows job counselors to facilitate referrals to and coordinate with other programs and services, including those within the one-stop delivery system and those provided by other organizations and agencies in the local area. Information and referral about specific programs and services may include, but is not limited to: Childcare Assistance, TANF, Child Support, SNAP, Medical Assistance, and Earned Income Tax Credit.

A resource plan is also developed for each participant to identify and track the exact mix of funds planned to be used to pay for training and supportive services. Should future funding become available that is more appropriate and/or takes priority over original resource plan funds, the resource plan may be modified. Additionally, the resource plan helps ensure that WIOA funds are not used to pay for training or services already covered by other sources.

- C. Describe how the local area board will facilitate the development of career pathways, co-enrollments (as appropriate) and activities that lead to industry recognized post-secondary credentials that are portable and stackable.

Career pathways align education and training programs with industry needs to help individuals develop the skills they need to get in-demand jobs and advance in their careers, while helping employers access the skilled workers they need to compete.

The Duluth WDB will continue its efforts to support career pathway development at both a local and regional level through the work of its Career Pathways Committee and employer-led working groups.

There are currently two working groups - one focused on healthcare and the other on hospitality, food service and accommodation – both established based on current labor market information. A third working group will be convened in partnership with the NE MN Workforce Board to focus on the skilled trades.

Key representatives participating in these groups include leadership from Industry, Lake Superior College, Adult Basic Education, ISD 709 Duluth Public Schools, Community Based Organizations and other Workforce Partners. The Career Pathways Toolkit has been an invaluable resource for guiding these efforts and ongoing to ensure clear understanding and integration of the Six Key Elements for Success.

The Duluth WDB recognizes Career Pathway Development as a proven strategy for connecting with underserved or hard-to-serve populations and has committed to developing pathways in a variety of industry areas. Key components of these pathways will include:

- Activities that lead to industry recognized post-secondary credentials that are portable and stackable.
- Entry-level “rungs” and supports that are accessible to low-skilled adults and adult English language learners.
- Contextualized training that integrates adult basic education (ABE) and English language learning with occupational skills;
- Shorter-term training opportunities that are available during nontraditional school hours or online.
- Blending or braiding of funding streams to maximize results, including co-enrollments (as appropriate).

14. A. Describe how the local area board will facilitate engagement of employers, including small employers, and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations, in workforce development programs.

Employer engagement is foundational to local workforce activities and is facilitated in a number of ways.

First, employer engagement is facilitated by staff at the Duluth Workforce Center. The local Business Services Representative (BSR) regularly meets with local employers to talk about solutions for finding and hiring new employees, retaining employees, accessing training resources, and general human resource information. The BSR is available to provide hiring and recruitment assistance, help employers develop effective job postings, work with job counselors to identify job seekers who match what the employer is looking for, and much more. The BSR schedules multiple hiring events at the Workforce Center throughout the year and coordinates the annual Northland Job Fair that involves more than 120 employers. Duluth also has a local Veteran’s Employment Representative (LVER) whose job it is to connect veterans to local employers and professional organizations for employment opportunities.

Second, employers engage through their involvement on the Local Workforce Development Board. Board members provide oversight of workforce development activities, share information on targeted sectors or occupations, establish credibility and access to employer networks, and/or engage other employers in program activities. Continued recruitment of new board members to ensure at least 51% of membership is from private business will be an ongoing part of local employer engagement activities.

Third, employer engagement is essential to the development of career pathways because they provide valuable information on industry trends and identify skills needed for targeted occupations. In Duluth, representatives from healthcare were recruited to serve on a working group specific to health-related occupations and have been instrumental in the development and mapping of specific pathways. Engagement of leaders from other industries in the local area and region will continue as efforts to broaden the career pathways network continue.

Fourth, employers can have a significant role in training/educational program design and content by reviewing curricula or providing input on program components, such

as entrance requirements or the program's structure and length. They can also provide valuable insight into what industry credentials may be associated with a program. For example, the healthcare working group recently helped develop the training and education track for a newly developed "Health Services Certificate" at Lake Superior College that will provide foundational knowledge and skill development for a variety of entry-level healthcare occupations in the local area.

Fifth, many employers engage directly with program participants by delivering various components of a training, such as talking to a class about what it is like to work in the field, teaching a component of a course, providing feedback to participants in mock interviews, or mentoring program participants. Employers may also provide services through work experience opportunities that help participants build skills and demonstrate experience. Work experience opportunities can be paid or unpaid internships or externships, clinical experiences required for licensure, transitional jobs, or apprenticeships where paid training at the worksite is part of the training program.

Finally, sector partnerships are a form of employer engagement that bring together multiple employers within an industry to collaborate with colleges, schools, labor, workforce agencies, community organizations and other community stakeholders. Sector partnerships align training with the skills needed for that industry to grow and compete and help facilitate the advancement of workers at all skill levels, including those with significant barriers.

- B. Describe how the local area board will support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local workforce development area.

The local workforce development system plays a key role in meeting the needs of business and there are multiple ways the local board can influence the workforce development system's effectiveness in this area.

One way to help meet the needs of business is to *better understand what they are experiencing*. To accomplish this, the Duluth Workforce Development Board recently conducted a small-scale employer engagement survey to learn about hiring difficulties and diversity in the workplace. The purpose of the survey is to a) increase board understanding of local workforce diversity in order to help bridge the gap between job seekers and employers, specifically for underrepresented populations and b) identify hiring challenges facing employers so that strategies can be developed to address them.

Another way to influence the system is for the board to *help create an aligned and coordinated approach that conveys the full strength of the system and increases its efficiency*. For example, when workforce development programs work in isolation to provide business services, increase contact with businesses, or solicit business input, the end result is a patchwork approach where some businesses are asked the same questions over and over, and others are left completely out of the conversation. Efforts to develop a more integrated system would save time for both partners and employers.

The board can also ensure that local businesses clearly understand the benefits of engaging with the public workforce system. From posting employment opportunities at www.minnesotaworks.net, accessing current labor market information, utilizing training services, or getting assistance with hiring and recruitment, there are multiple ways the local workforce development system can support employers and their

workers.

Introducing new and innovative strategies to meet employer workforce demand is another way the board can support businesses in the local area. For example, Registered Apprenticeship is an employer-driven model that combines on-the-job training with job-related instruction, which progressively increases an apprentice's skill level and wages. While most often associated with the skilled trades, there are currently more than 1,000 occupations – including careers in health care, information technology, transportation, and energy – in which apprenticeship is used to meet business needs for qualified workers. Apprenticeship offers an industry-proven approach for preparing workers for careers while meeting employers' need for a highly-skilled workforce.

- C. Describe how the local area board will better coordinate programs and services with regional economic development providers.

The local area board will work to increase coordination between workforce programs and services with regional economic development providers by facilitating communication and connectivity between economic development entities and workforce system partners to ensure activities meet the needs of employers and support economic growth.

This can be accomplished by:

- A) Engaging economic development providers on the local board and/or committees;
- B) Participating on the Mayor's Economic Development Committee;
- C) Maintaining frequent contact with the City's Business and Economic Development Department (of which Workforce Development is a part) and DEED's Community and Business Development staff;
- D) Involving economic development providers in development of career pathways and sector specific initiatives;
- E) Frequently engaging with economic development partners such as APEX, UMD Center for Economic Development, the Northspan Group, Duluth Local Initiatives Support Corporation, and others.

- D. Describe how the local area board will strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs by offering services to laid-off workers and possible lay-off preventative services for businesses, such as incumbent worker training that up-skills the workers and meets the needs of employers (can include but not be limited to, on-the-job training, apprenticeships, etc.).

The local workforce system will strengthen linkages with Unemployment Insurance (UI) programs by working more closely with local Reemployment Assistance (REA) staff. Job Service and Dislocated Worker staff participate in REA sessions and ensure attendees are introduced to the broad array of services available through the Workforce Center System. Information about on-the-job training, education and training opportunities, and supportive services available to program enrollees is provided during each REA session. Participants are also extended an opportunity to meet with a Dislocated Worker Job Counselor at the end of the session.

The Business Services Representative (BSR) at the Duluth Workforce Center also serves as an important link between the workforce system and UI because of the established relationships she has with local employers. It is not uncommon for

employers to contact her if a layoff is anticipated. She is trained in Rapid Response and notifies the state immediately of any impending action. If the BSR is not available, Job Service staff has also been trained and will respond.

MinnesotaWorks also provides a connection to Workforce Center services through Wagner-Peyser staff who periodically review the job bank for new registrations and invite those individuals to the Workforce Center for information about available services. Additionally, Job Service staff will search the database for qualified job seekers to match relevant business job openings. Online resume review assistance is offered to all REA participants focusing on building employer friendly searchable content in a MinnesotaWorks resume.

15. Describe how the local area board will coordinate workforce investment activities with economic development activities, including the promotion of entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

The Duluth Workforce Development Board's strategic plan actively supports efforts of staff to collaborate with economic development partners in attracting companies to the area.

Members and staff are also connected to the Mayor's Economic Development Committee, maintain frequent contact with the City's Business and Economic Development Department (of which Workforce Development is a part), involve economic development providers in development of career pathways and sector specific initiatives; and engage with economic development partners such as APEX, the Northspan Group, Duluth Local Initiatives Support Corporation, and the NORTHFORCE talent community.

Additionally, the Duluth Workforce Center hosts a two hour "How to Start a Business" workshop one time per month where staff from the UMD Center for Economic Development (CED) answer questions about entrepreneurship and discuss what it takes for someone to run his or her own business.

16. A. Describe how the local area board will ensure continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system.

To ensure continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system, the local area board will work in partnership with the State to:

- Connect with educational institutions and training providers to ensure they are familiar with the WIOA certification process and provide assistance as needed;
- Work with new and existing training providers and programs of training services to ensure accurate eligibility criteria and performance information has been documented prior to submission DEED for final approval;
- Provide technical assistance for one-stop operators and partners, and eligible training providers on the provision of services to individuals with disabilities
- Make recommendations for approval or denial of providers and program to the State as needed;
- Facilitate completion of eligible training provider performance reports as directed.

- B. Describe how the local area board will ensure that eligible providers meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and job seekers.

The local area board will facilitate connectivity between eligible training providers and employers as part of industry and sector partnerships to ensure employers have the ability to directly influence training/educational program design and content to guarantee it will meet their needs.

The local area board will promote and strategies such as incumbent worker training, Registered Apprenticeship, transitional jobs, on-the-job training, and customized training, all of which help meet the needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers and engage eligible training providers.

The local area board will consider utilizing additional procurement vehicles for training to increase customer choice and quality, including individual training accounts, pay for performance contracts, and direct contracts with higher education.

The local board also supports staff efforts to work with local employers, workers and job seekers to access the state job bank (www.minnesotaworks.net) to register, post and review resumes.

- C. Describe how the local area board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and other means.

The Duluth Workforce Development Board recognizes technology must play a greater role in service delivery in order to increase access to programs. Program staff in the Workforce Center are currently exploring development of electronic, fillable application forms, online assessment tools, and other and resources that could be completed on or downloaded from a website. The use of technology will not only streamline processes, but can also address the transportation barrier that sometimes prevents individuals from accessing services. As mentioned previously in the Plan, this is one area of capacity building the City of Duluth VISTA member will assess and work to expand in the coming year.

To increase access via technology in a substantive way; however, we will look for assistance from DEED through initiatives like the virtual one stop to help local providers increase access to services provided through the Workforce Center. Most providers don't have the expertise or resources to develop independent portals to services, so collaboration with state-level partners will be critical to increasing access via technology.

- D. Describe how entities within the one-stop delivery system will comply with section 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology and materials for individuals with disabilities including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

All programs within the Minnesota Workforce system are expected to be fully accessible to all Minnesotans. For this reason, Workforce Centers are equipped with accessible equipment that is monitored by the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) to ensure it is current and in working order. Software developed by DEED for Workforce Centers is also designed to be

fully accessible.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services and State Services for the Blind located within the Workforce Centers are available for consultation with other programs, should unexpected issues of accessibility occur. There is frequent co-enrollment and collaboration between Vocational Rehabilitation and the other partners, which further enhances overall accessibility.

On a statewide level, an accessibility assessment is completed at each Workforce Center prior to certification and at intervals on an ongoing basis.

E. Describe the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners.

Duluth Workforce Development

Duluth Workforce Development provides a number of employment, job training, and career assistance programs for individuals who live *within the city limits of Duluth* and are out of work or who have suffered job loss for a variety of reasons.

The *Y.E.S. Duluth* program provides education and employment services for youth 16-24 years of age.

The *Senior Community Service Employment Program* helps workers who are 55 or older to build the experience and confidence they need to find permanent employment.

The *WIOA Adult Program* serves individuals 18 years old or older who meet family income guidelines and are eligible to work in the United States. Male participants born after 1960 must be in compliance with Military Selective Service requirements, and all participants need to have a willingness and ability to make a commitment to staying in regular contact with a Job Counselor while in the program. WIOA Adult enrollees can receive assistance with: career planning, job search, job training (including funding for eligible school programs), follow-up, and related services.

The *Dislocated Worker Program* offers services to help individuals who have lost a job through no fault of their own and need help returning to work find suitable employment. Services provided may include career planning and counseling, job search assistance, vocational assessments, and funding for counselor-approved training.

Duluth Workforce Development also provides employment and training services for the *Diversionary Work Program (DWP)* and *Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP)*. DWP is a 4 month program that provides services and support to eligible families to help them move immediately to full time work rather than go on to MFIP. MFIP is a *Work First* focused program designed to assist public assistance recipients and enhance their efforts so they can successfully transition from Welfare-to-Work. Structured job search coupled with a *Work First* training curriculum, job club support network, and resume development, prepares individuals for work and emphasizes the importance and values of work.

AEOA (Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency)

AEOA is a private not-for-profit agency that provides various programs throughout the Arrowhead region of Minnesota. Each of the 13 offices provides unique services to the area it serves. The Employment Counselors located at the Minnesota

Workforce Center in Duluth provide Employment and Training services to families accessing *Minnesota's Diversionary Work Program* (DWP) and the *Minnesota Family Investment Program* (MFIP) in Southern St. Louis County. AEOA also provides State Dislocated Worker services.

Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training

The Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training provides a number of employment and training services to the unemployed, underemployed, and those seeking new or different job opportunities within the seven counties of Northeast Minnesota (Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, and St. Louis *excluding the City of Duluth*).

Services available to eligible *dislocated workers, youth, or adults* include personalized career assessments and guidance, job search assistance and resources, funding for education, work experience, on-the-training opportunities, and support services.

State of Minnesota

Job Service is the program through which several of DEED's key services to job seekers and certain workforce-development services to businesses are delivered. Services target three main areas: Business, Veteran's and Reemployment Assistance. Staff also assist customers utilizing services in the Resource Room and facilitate a variety of workshops.

State Services for the Blind (SSB) helps people who are blind, visually impaired, or DeafBlind to live and work as independently as possible. Services include training people to adjust to blindness and vision loss, exploring assistive technology, and teaching adults how to prepare for, find and keep jobs.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) specializes in working with individuals with disabilities that create barriers to employment, post-secondary training, independent living and community integration. VRS provides pre-employment transition services, vocational assessments, job tryouts, community-based evaluations, job search assistance, job coaching, case management, tuition assistance and supportive services. Staff from Vocational Rehabilitation Services are available as needed, to consult with partners who happen to be working with individuals with disabilities.

All partners contribute to the infrastructure of the WorkForce Center system and co-enroll consumers with other one-stop partners to avoid duplication and ensure wrap-around services are provided.

17. Describe and assess the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local workforce development area.

Duluth Workforce Development is the provider of adult and dislocated worker programming under WIOA and State-funded programs, including WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker and the Minnesota Dislocated Worker Program.

- Adult program enrollees have access to assistance with career planning, job search, job training (including funding for eligible school programs), follow-up, and related services.
- Dislocated Worker program enrollees have access to assistance with career planning, job search, job training (including funding for eligible school programs), follow-up, and related services.

For increased convenience and accessibility, residents of southern St. Louis County who reside in areas immediately outside of Duluth (outside city limits) can receive WIOA Adult services at the Duluth Workforce Center from the Northeast Minnesota Office of Job Training (NEMOJT). DWD and NEMOJT coordinate to avoid duplication and ensure seamless delivery of service.

Reemployment Eligibility Assessment (REA) activities also help connect individuals to dislocated worker services by bringing individuals receiving unemployment insurance benefits into the Workforce Center for personalized assessments and referrals to reemployment services.

18. Describe and assess the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local workforce development area, including youth with disabilities, which description and assessment shall include an identification of successful models of such youth workforce development activities.

A variety of youth workforce development activities in the local workforce development area are delivered by Workforce Center partners including:

Duluth Workforce Development is the provider of WIOA and State youth employment and training activities. YES! Duluth provides education and employment services for youth 16-24 years of age, including but not limited to:

- Assistance with development of personal goals and supports to achieve them
- One-on-one career counseling (includes assessment of personality, ability/aptitude, and interests as they relate to careers);
- Job search assistance and strategy, including skill development (resume writing, cover letters, interviewing, follow-up)
- Individualized tutoring to help achieve a GED or High School Diploma,
- Placement in paid work experience to gain employability skills and understanding employer expectations, including temporary or seasonal jobs and internships
- Postsecondary planning
- Funding for training,
- Assistance with college enrollment
- Supportive services to address barriers such as a bus pass or gas card on a monthly basis for transportation or vouchers for work clothes/uniforms as needed.

These services are available to both in and out of school youth.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) serves youth with disabilities from the age of 14-21. Youth who are still in school and have not graduated from high school are eligible for Pre-Employment Transition Services. These can include job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or post-secondary educational programs at institutions of higher education, workplace readiness training, and instruction in self-advocacy. These services can be provided for students whether or not they have applied for services. The specifics of how these services will be provided is still being developed pending the final WIOA regulations.

VRS also provides services to transition-aged youth who apply for services and meet the state's current priority for service. Individuals in this group can be either in school or out of school and can receive any service Vocational Rehabilitation Services offers if it is necessary for the student to reach their educational and employment goals.

Co-enrollment opportunities also exist and job counselors will link participants to other programs based on eligibility as well as the youth's needs and goals. Referrals to/from: SNAP, SSB, VRS, MFIP, MYP, Competitive Grants, TANF, and the Adult Program are frequently made and because these programs are co-located within the same building, youth can be easily referred and contact between programs can be seamless.

Community-Based Programming is also important to meeting the workforce development needs of youth/young adults so Workforce Center job counselors often partner with organizations in the community to meet youth where they are most comfortable. For example, YES! Duluth is expanding its connectivity to agencies at different locations in the community by being available during ABE orientation sessions at the Area Learning Center (ALC) and working with Life House education staff to support youth working on their GED.

Opportunities for Collaboration: Duluth Workforce Development recently partnered with Life House, SOAR Career Solutions, ISD 709, Lake Superior College, ABE and Woodland Hills on a collaborative grant proposal that would provide funding to facilitate increased access and coordination of supports for Opportunity Youth (individuals between the ages of 16 and 24 who are neither in school nor working) and introduce them to Career Pathways.

By working together, individual agencies and programs can leverage resources and align efforts to effectively serve youth and young adults in the local area and we will continue to seek out these types of opportunities.

19. Describe how the local area board will coordinate education and workforce investment activities carried out under this title with relevant secondary and post-secondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.

Education and workforce investment activities under WIOA are coordinated with relevant secondary and post-secondary education programs in a variety of ways.

Duluth Workforce Development is working closely with ISD 709 to create a clear "pathway" for career development that links the efforts of students in the classroom to YES! Duluth, work experience in the community and meaningful career exploration opportunities. Discussion is also underway regarding integration of YES! Duluth staff into High School Career Centers and representatives from ISD 709 actively participate on the Duluth Workforce Development Board's Career Pathways and Youth/Education Committees.

The Duluth Workforce Center is actively involved with planning and coordination of the annual Construct Tomorrow event which brings local high school students together to learn about apprenticeship career training and opportunities in the construction industry. Hands-on activities provide youth with an opportunity to explore and experience different occupations and connect with industry experts. This year's event drew in more than 1,800 students.

Workforce Center staff maintain frequent contact with academic advisors on all college campuses and have regular office hours at Lake Superior College to advise current and prospective program participants. Staff also periodically present to students about job seeking, career development and other related topics.

A significant portion of WIOA tuition funding for a variety of vocational training programs is expended at LSC and we have collaborated on several of workforce development initiatives, including FastTRAC projects, the Minnesota Advanced Manufacturing Project (MnAMP) and other Adult worker grants.

ABE will also soon be co-located at Lake Superior College to provide integrated instruction, learning labs, college prep bridges and boot camps to prepare students for entry into coursework, and serve as resources for students struggling with basic literacy or English language learning.

These partnerships help ensure that potentially program eligible students who register for training are connected with workforce system resources. We will continue to increase alignment by a) connecting with a wider audience about WIOA programs (including instructors and financial aid staff at all local colleges) in order to increase program participation and identify ways of better supporting mutual students; b) providing prospective and existing students with a better foundation for understanding of occupational opportunities in the local area; and c) developing a career pathways system that will help identify opportunities for increased alignment and ways to enhance shared services to reduce duplication among providers.

20. Describe how the local area board will coordinate education and workforce investment activities carried out under this title with public transportation and other appropriate supportive services.

Providing access to supportive services for eligible individuals is an integral part of the existing case management system for all core partners. All programs offered through the local workforce development system incorporate supportive services such as access to transportation resources, assistance with childcare costs, and a variety of supportive services for individuals attending training (tutoring, study skills, test prep, etc.). Most programs offered by core partners also include provisions for clothing or equipment required for a new job and resources for medical needs, relocation, and emergency financial assistance.

Efforts to identify additional sources of support is part of the planned environmental scan and asset mapping process being undertaken by the Northeast and Duluth Workforce Development Board as part of the regional planning process. This initiative will identify the depth and breadth of services related to supporting job seekers and may uncover sources of support services that aren't presently accessed by Workforce Center staff. These sources can be introduced to the Workforce Center system through formal MOUs or informal referral processes in order to increase access to supportive services.

21. Describe the plans and strategies for, and assurances concerning, maximizing coordination of service provided by the state employment service under Wagner-Peyser Act, and services provided in the local workforce development area through the one-stop delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.

Services under the Wagner Peyser Act focus on providing a variety of employment related labor exchange services including but not limited to job search assistance, job referral and placement assistance for job seekers, re-employment services to unemployment insurance claimants, and recruitment services to employers with job openings.

Wagner Peyser staff monitor the state job bank (www.minnesotaworks.net) and coordinate with Workforce Center staff to provide individual assistance to job seekers.

Services include Reemployment Assistance (REA), New Leaf workshops, individual Veteran Services appointments, Creative Job Search, basic computer classes, and other related activities. Master calendars of workshop dates are distributed to all staff, Workforce Center patrons and community partners.

Services to businesses are also provided by Wagner Peyser staff assisting with recruiting and retention activities, outreach, and community engagement.

22. Describe how the local area board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out under this title in the local workforce development area with the provision of adult education and literacy activities under title II, including a description of how the local area board will carry out, consistent with subparagraphs (A) and (B)(i) of section 107(d)(11) and section 232, the review of local applications submitted under title II.

ISD 709 Adult Basic Education (ABE) is an active partner in the local and regional workforce system. Duluth ABE Program Director, Patty Fleege, is a member of the Duluth Workforce Development Board, actively engaged in the Career Pathways committee, and chair of the Youth/Education Committee.

ABE currently partners with a variety of program and agencies in the local area including the Duluth Workforce Center, Lake Superior College, SOAR, Community Action Duluth, other community-based organizations and the Duluth Public Library.

ABE co-enrolls and cross refers students to employment service programs, provides GED test prep and testing services, and provides integrated instruction for career pathway programs. ABE has programming and partnerships that create multiple points of entry for students along several career pathways and is committed to working closely with the local Board to embed this work further across the local area.

23. Describe the replicated cooperative agreements (as defined in section 107(d)(11)) between the local area board or other local entities described in section 101(a)(11)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11)(B)) and the local office of a designated state agency or designated state unit administering programs carried out under title I of such Act (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.) (other than section 112 or part C of that title (29 U.S.C. 732, 741) and subject to section 121(f)) in accordance with section 101(a)(11) of such Act (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11)) with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination.

Vocational Rehabilitation Services collaborates to enhance services to individuals with disabilities, individuals with other barriers to employment, and individuals living in poverty. To the extent possible, services are co-located in WorkForce Centers to provide access to a wide variety of services. Each WorkForce Center provides an orientation to services available to assist job-seekers make an informed decision on choice of service provider. Direct service staff participate in cross-training to ensure they understand the services offered by the various partners, and the eligibility criteria for each program.

Vocational Rehabilitation staff is available for consultation without the need for the person to apply for services. Typical topics include how and when to disclose a disability, effective use of assistive technology, Social Security work incentives, and

benefits planning. There is currently a joint effort to provide joint financial planning and work incentives planning for individuals receiving Social Security Disability Insurance. Disability Benefits 101, a software program developed using Medicaid Infrastructure grant funding, is available to all partners to assist staff inform job-seekers about the impact earned income will have on federal and state benefits, including public health insurance.

The Duluth WDB consults with Vocational Rehabilitation Services and other partners as initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, customized training programs, career pathways initiatives, youth services, and other business services are developed.

Vocational Rehabilitation participates in local Job Fairs and other community events. Local partners also share job leads, and Vocational Rehabilitation may purchase placement services from the local Board as part of a performance-based funding agreement.

24. Describe and identify the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in section 107(d)(12)(B)(i).

WIOA Section 107 (d)(12)(B)(i)(I) states that the chief elected official in a local area shall serve as the local grant recipient for, and shall be liable for any misuse of, the grant funds allocated to the local area. In Local Workforce Development Area 4 (City of Duluth), this is Mayor Emily Larson.

WIOA Section 107 (d)(12)(B)(i)(II) states that the chief local elected official may designate an entity to serve as a local fiscal agent to assist in the administration of grant funds. The entity that has been designated under this provision that serves as the local fiscal agent is the Duluth Workforce Development Division of the City of Duluth. Duluth Workforce Development staff are located in the Duluth Workforce Center.

25. Describe the competitive process to be used to award the sub-grants and contracts in the local workforce development area for activities carried out under this title.

Duluth Workforce Development adheres to requirements pertaining to the procurement for State and local governmental grantees and sub grantees of goods and services both competitive and non-competitive listed in 29 CFR 97.36. The Duluth Workforce Development Board (Duluth WDB) shall make recommendations to the Mayor of Duluth on the most effective designation of administrative entities, grant recipients and program operators for the area with the exception of the State of Minnesota Job Service, as the administrative entity and grant for Wagner-Peyser, Veterans Title 38 programs and unemployment insurance.

Should the Duluth WDB wish to identify a new service provider, a competitive Request for Proposals process would be instituted. The RFP process includes solicitation for bids that request comprehensive information addressing the following elements: knowledge of identified need, experience of administration and staff, services to be provided, performance outcomes, commitment to partnerships and collaboration, budget and costs, and operational capability. Each one of these criteria are assigned a point value and ranked for a total score. The solicitation contains a description of program requirements and basic design elements to which bidders respond. Eligibility for bidding includes organizations which have adequate administrative controls and personnel to achieve the goals and objectives of the program. This includes but is not limited to governmental units, public or private non-profit corporations, educational institutions, a tax supported organization or a private or for-profit entity.

The Board will soon be working on the parameters for selecting a One Stop Operator by July 1, 2017, as required under WIOA. Part of this process will be to perform a cost analysis of the current site supervisor/Partner Group system that now acts in this capacity by coordinating programs, services and the Duluth Workforce Center. The annual cost/price of such services will determine the method of procurement that will be used per 2 C.F.R. Parts 200.319 and 200.320, defining allowable procurement methods corresponding to the dollar amount of services to be procured. According to this statute, if the total cost is determined to be less than \$150,000, price or rate quotations can be obtained from an adequate number of qualified sources rather than deploying a RFP process.

26. Describe how the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official will be used to measure the performance of the local workforce development area and to be used by the local area board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent, eligible providers under subtitle B and the One-stop delivery system.

The Duluth Workforce Development Board expects that local service providers will, at a minimum, meet the performance standards negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official, as they apply to each program/Title. Historically, the local area has met or exceeded all performance standards under WIA and it is anticipated this will continue under WIOA.

The local board will review performance on a quarterly basis, with a more in-depth review at the close of each program year. Staff will provide board members with a dashboard of key performance indicators and, in the event that adjustments to local policy or service delivery need to be made, the local board will work with one-stop partners to make necessary adjustments.

The Board is also aware of the two new additional performance standards under WIOA - employer engagement and measurable skill gains - that have yet to be clearly defined by the Department of Labor, including mechanisms for measuring these criteria. When clarification is received under the final regulations due later this year, the Board will work with providers to ensure these new measures are fully understood and a plan is in place to monitor achievement of these standards.

27. Describe the actions the local area board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing board, consistent with the factors developed by the state board.

While specific criteria for what constitutes a high performing board has not yet been clearly articulated by the state board, the Duluth Workforce Development Board (Duluth WDB) will strive to achieve the expectations for local boards identified in each of the six areas of strategy described in the Combined State Plan. These include:

Business Led Sector Partnerships: The Duluth WDB will select 1-3 sectors to pursue sector partnerships. Drawing from State labor market information, these sector partnerships will focus on identifying occupations in demand that provide career pathways to family sustaining wages. The Duluth WDB will work to align core program activities and coordinate sector partnerships. Under the guidance of the Board and leadership of the Career Pathways Committee, career pathway information will be incorporated into job search and career planning activities, distributed through various local outlets (media, education, business, community-based organizations and programs, etc.) to facilitate greater awareness by program participants, the general public, and all individuals who are seeking careers with family sustaining wages.

Workforce Stakeholder Engagement: The Duluth WDB will identify socio-economically disadvantaged populations through the use of data and public engagement. The goal of this process is to identify what causes barriers to successful access to employment and training services and the outcomes that these services seek to achieve. The Duluth WDB will facilitate workforce stakeholder engagement focused on identifying and recommending strategies that address barriers to success, including various population-centric perspectives of how the system itself impedes access to services, service design needs and a customer-centric look at how the system is organized. While there is much more to be done, the Duluth WDB is already working to engage stakeholders by conducting a recent employer engagement survey focused on hiring difficulties and diversity in the workplace and a soon-to-be conducted job-seeker survey focused on identifying barriers to success and recommended strategies for addressing these barriers.

Employment and Training Program Design: The Duluth WDB will work with local system partners to identify the design needs across the available system partners that deliver employment, education and training activities. A primary focus will be on utilizing existing career pathway experiences to assist with understanding how local areas can build off their past success and expand the capacity of their work over time. Facilitated by the Duluth WDB, the employment, education and training efforts will assist core program activity alignment with the Career Pathways approach.

Funding Needs and Resources: The Duluth WDB will work with local system partners to map local and regional resources that support employment and training efforts to better understand the gaps and assets for how the system is funded and coordinated at its broadest level. Facilitated by the Duluth WDB, an assessment specific to the core programs will be conducted with an underlying emphasis of how the core programs interact within the one-stop centers and community related partnerships.

Policy and Program Alignment: The Duluth WDB will work to adopt local policies that support and encourage program alignment across system partners. Existing MOUs will evolve into a central component of creating a Career Pathways system.

System Management: The Duluth WDB will work with local system partners to integrate a system management approach that demonstrates the shared benefit and connections that programs have in working together.

28. Describe how training services under chapter 3 of subtitle B will be provided in accordance with section 134(c)(3)(G), including, if contracts for training services will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts under that chapter and how the local area board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs, regardless of how the training services are to be provided.

Individual Training Accounts (ITA) are used for program participants who receive training funds under WIOA and represent a payment agreement established on behalf of a participant with a training provider. ITA's linked to in-demand industry sectors and occupations in the local area or other regions to which the adult or dislocated worker is willing to relocate. Contracts for training services are rarely used in Local Workforce Development Area 4.

Ensuring a clear understanding of all training options available for a specific occupation is an integral part of the case management process. Adult and Dislocated Worker program participants work closely with their job counselor to select an appropriate

training program that corresponds to their individual goals and that aligns with opportunities within the local economy. Part of this process involves looking at all available training programs for a specified occupation and discussing the quality and performance of each training providers. This allows for an informed choice to be made in the selection of a specific training program.

29. Describe the process used by the local area board to provide opportunity for public comment, including comment by representatives from businesses and comment by representatives of labor organizations; and input into the development of the local plan, prior to submission of the plan.

The PY17 Local Unified Plan was made available for public viewing and public comment using internet and electronic communication. A draft of the Local Plan was emailed to all Duluth Workforce Development Board members one week prior to public posting. The Plan was then posted on the City of Duluth website from April 7, 2016 – May 9, 2016 with a link for receiving public comment. A legal advertisement was placed in the Duluth News Tribune to announce the posting and email notices were sent directly to key stakeholders and community partners. Following the posting period, comments were reviewed and revisions were incorporated into the Plan prior to it being submitted to the State by May 13, 2016.

30. Describe how the one-stop centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under this Act and programs carried out by one-stop partners.

The current case management information system used by one-stop center partners is Workforce One (WF1), an integrated mechanism for documenting case notes, tracking activities, support services, achievements including credential attainment, and follow-up.

Intake is currently conducted via a paper process, however some partners are exploring development of electronic, fillable application forms, online assessment tools, and other and resources that could be completed on or downloaded from a website. This is one area of capacity building the City of Duluth VISTA member will assess and work to expand in the coming year.

Job counselors in the youth program frequently utilize texting to communicate with program participants, a tool that could also be effective for other programs. The Duluth Workforce Center has implemented a new communication form that can be completed by individuals who “drop in” at a time his/her counselor is not available and asks which method of communication the client prefers – text, email or phone – so the job counselor can follow-up with them. Since many are using smart phones as their primary way of communicating and often prefer the ease and expediency of texting, this can be an effective way to facilitate communication between job counselors and their clients.

Program providers will also be working to ensure websites are accessible by individuals with disabilities or English language learners and are optimized for mobile platforms. Some of these efforts involve complexities that will have to be addressed and a need for additional resources to implement, however these efforts will have a significant impact on the number of individuals who are able to access the system.

SECTION C: PROGRAM OPERATIONS

1. A. How does the local workforce development area ensure staff comply with the policies and procedures for Rapid Response as communicated on DEED's website?

Duluth Workforce Development (DWD) has a long history of communication with Rapid Response and will notify the State Rapid Response Team within 24 hours of learning about a dislocation event via email and/or telephone to comply with DEED's Rapid Response policy. Additionally, Business Services staff have been trained by the Rapid Response Team to assist in providing the required services.

If DWD has local contacts at the employer, this information is provided to Rapid Response and DWD will make direct contact on their behalf when requested. Although DWD has occasionally been involved with competitive projects (wherein a proposal is submitted for consideration by the Employee Management Planning Committee), DWD has most often served layoff events using existing formula funds.

In prior years, large scale events that affected the City of Duluth and nearby communities were cooperatively served by NE Minnesota and Duluth. In these cases, staff from both agencies participate in employee meetings arranged by Rapid Response and the local Unemployment Insurance (UI) representative comes in to educate affected employees about eligibility and application procedures for UI.

- B. How does the local workforce development area inform the state Rapid Response team within 24 hours about an actual or potential dislocation event when there is possibility of a mass layoff (50 or more dislocations)?

Events of this magnitude attract a great deal of attention in Duluth, particularly through the local media. Staff also have access to WARN notice information provided to the Mayor, because Duluth Workforce Development is a division of the City. In some cases, staff may be contacted directly by the employer and as a result, may be able to advise Rapid Response even before a formal announcement has even been made.

Staff advises Rapid Response of all mass layoff events as soon as we become aware of them. Contact with staff in St. Paul is made by phone or email.

- C. Describe how the local area board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local workforce development area with statewide rapid response activities.

To avoid duplication of services, the Local Board encourages coordination and alignment of services between Dislocated Worker Program and Rapid Response activities. For example, Dislocated Worker staff may partner with Rapid Response to provide onsite information sessions for affected employees or provide printed materials to the employer to give to affected workers. Additionally, if the employer provides a list of affected workers, staff will coordinate with Rapid Response to determine who will contact these individuals to notify them of the availability of dislocated worker services.

- D. Complete **Attachment B – Local Workforce Development Area Contacts**.

2. A. How does the local workforce development area inform the state Trade Act staff of companies that are potentially TAA certifiable?

Past experience with TAA certified projects has provided DWD staff with first-hand experience and familiarity with conditions under which TAA petitions may be approved. When information regarding a possible dislocation event is received, WIOA Title I-B Dislocated Worker staff and the Rapid Response team are notified and the potential of TAA certification is discussed. Rapid Response or the local liaison then communicates with the State Trade Act unit regarding potential certification.

- B. How does the local workforce development area cooperate with the state Trade Act staff where the layoff involves a company that the DOL trade-certified?

DWD job counselors have participated in TAA training provided by DEED and clearly understand their role in cases where a layoff involves a company that has been TAA certified.

DWD strives to coordinate services effectively with the State Trade Act staff by maintaining open communication, assisting with initial informational meetings, assisting customers in completing the Trade Act application, contacting Trade Act staff when there are customer concerns, communicating Trade Act staff concerns to customers, and participating in Trade Act related trainings.

- C. Is the local workforce development area willing to participate in TAA Counselor Training and TAA Participant Training when a trade-certification occurs?

Yes X

3. A. The local workforce development area has developed and implemented local Supportive Service policies that are consistently applied for all participants.

Yes X

- B. Describe the steps taken to ensure consistent compliance with the policy.

Duluth Workforce Development has established categories, limits, duration and amount of services allowed for each program and in partnership with the City Auditor's Office, has established internal controls to ensure consistent compliance and accuracy.

Job Counselors, based on individual assessment and availability of funds, award support services to eligible participants according to the local area's supportive service policies. They also utilize Workforce One and issue support services through an internal voucher system. All vouchers have signatory requirements and payments are written to vendors rather than program participants.

Financial reviews occur monthly and requests for support exceeding maximum program amounts must be approved by management.

SECTION D: SYSTEM OPERATIONS AND ATTACHMENTS

1. The local workforce development area has processes in place to assure non-duplicative services, and avoid duplicate administrative costs.

Yes X

2. The local workforce development area is aware of and staff participate in the Reception and Resource Area Certification Program (RRACP) to better serve all customers?

Yes X

3. A. The local workforce development area and their partners are aware of the responsibilities of the Equal Opportunity Officer, including attending DEED sponsored EO Training?

Yes X

B. Complete **Attachment B – Local Workforce Development Area Contacts**.

- C. The local workforce development area is aware and conducts annually a physical and program accessibility review?

Yes X

4. Does the local workforce development area have in place an agreed upon WIOA Discrimination complaint process per the regulations?

Yes X

5. A. Does the local workforce development area have in place an agreed upon WIOA Program Complaint Policy per the regulations?

Yes X

B. Complete **Attachment B – Local Workforce Development Area Contacts**.

6. How do you identify current or former Military Service Members coming into your WorkForce Center?

There are a number of ways to identify Veterans in the Workforce Center:

- As individuals enter the center, the receptionist greets customers at the front desk. Through a series of questions, we learn how to best serve the individual. All customers are asked if they have served in the US military. When a veteran discloses their service the front desk staff will request that they fill out a questionnaire to determine barriers and need.
- Resource Room staff ask about Veteran status and encourage vets to complete the questionnaire.
- Persons applying for WIOA programs are asked about military service during intake/application.
- County Veteran's Service office and MAC-V refers individuals to the WFC for services as well.

- Individuals signing into the Resource Room Customer Registration System indicating Military Service are flagged as Veterans and contacted via e-mail, phone or letter.

7. How do you inform current or former Military Service Members coming into your WorkForce Center about “Veteran Priority of Service?”

Once an individual discloses that he/she has served in the military, they are asked to complete a “veteran’s questionnaire”. Once complete, they receive service immediately from the Veteran’s Representative if they have an identified significant barrier to employment or, if the Vet’s rep is unavailable, a staff member who is able to provide intensive services.

As referenced in the response to the above question, individuals are asked about their status as a vet by resource room personnel. Self-identifying vets are referred to programs that suit their needs, including WIOA programs and the DVOP if a significant barrier to employment is identified. No veteran is ever turned away for service, including enrollment into programs.

To ensure that all staff are deeply familiar with priority of service provisions for veterans, all staff will participate in upcoming priority of service training throughout the region. Staff, particularly those who staff resource areas and reception desks, will also participate in online training through NVTI (National Veterans Training Institute) geared toward educating one stop staff about veteran priority of service. This training can be found at <http://www.nvtihelpvets.ucdenver.edu/splash.php>.

8. If your WorkForce Center has a presence on the Internet (outside of your local DEED WorkForce Center site) how do you promote Public Law 107-288, “Veterans Priority of Service” to veterans on that website?

The Duluth Workforce Development web page includes the following statement: *Current or former military members, no matter the era of service, receive priority services in all WorkForce Centers across the state and can be assisted by specially trained veterans employment representatives.* We will be updating the web page later this year and will add a link to the Veteran’s Service section of the DEED website.

9. How do you identify current or former Military Service Members with “significant barriers to employment?”

Staff who work the resource room and/or reception desk use the Veteran Services approved questionnaire to identify current or former military service members with significant barriers to employment. Veterans’ representatives are given all completed surveys and follow up with individuals who express a need for services and have a significant barrier to employment.

10. When a current or former Military Service Member with a significant barrier to employment is identified, how do you refer them to an appropriate intensive service provider when there is no Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) specialist in your WorkForce Centers?

If s DVOP specialist is not available and the individual has indicated “yes” on the form, they will typically receive services immediately. All veterans, including those with significant barriers to employment, are referred to appropriate service providers by front desk or resource room personnel to assist them with expressed need. They are never

denied services or enrollment for any reason.

11. How are DVOP and/or Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER) staff integrated into the overall service delivery strategy in your WorkForce Centers?

The Duluth Workforce Center is fortunate to have both a DVOP and LVER on site where they can regularly interact with all staff and clients to make sure all veterans are served. The DVOP will work closely with program staff to follow-up with common clients and be a resource for any veteran related questions. The DVOP regularly attends the REA sessions to assure unemployed veterans are made aware of available programs and services.

12. Are all WIOA-funded partners complying with the guidance provided in the TEGL regarding Selective Service?

Yes X

13. What is your strategy to ensure that job-ready job seekers enrolled in your programs (including non-program universal customers) are registering in MinnesotaWorks.net and are making their resumes viewable to employers?

Job Service has information available in the reception and resource area that gives complete instructions for registering with Minnesotaworks.net.

Staff in the resource area also inform customers about Minnesotaworks.net and provide individual assistance to those needing help with registration and/or entering resumes so they are viewable to employers. A weekly workshop called "Make Minnesotaworks work for You" is offered to at the Workforce Center to assist customers in how to navigate through the site and how to post a resume.

Staff that provide workshops inform all participants about Minnesotaworks.net and provide instructions on how to register. In accordance with the priority of service for Veterans, Veterans that are receiving case management services are required to be registered on Minnesotaworks.net.

All UI recipients enrolled in Re-employment Assistance are also required to register on Minnesotaworks.net and receive information about creating viewable resumes.

14. **Conflict of Interest and Integrity:** Local area boards must make decisions in keeping with several laws and regulations. Indicate below that your local area board is aware of DOL Training and Employment Guidance Letter 35-10 and Minnesota OGM 08-01 and its relevant federal laws and regulations.

Yes X

15. The local workforce development area's conflict of interest policies are in compliance with the above two references?

Yes X

16. A. The local workforce development area is aware of the referenced statute on Government Records.

Yes X

- B. The local workforce development area is aware of the requirement to retain documentation for six years.

Yes X

- C. Complete **Attachment B – Local Workforce Development Area Contacts**.

17. **Handling and Protection of Personally Identifiable Information:** The local workforce development area is complying with the guidance provided in TEGL 39-11.

Yes X

18. **Human Trafficking:** The local workforce development area is aware of TEGL 09-12 and will follow the procedures for working with trafficked persons.

Yes X

19. **Gender Identification:** The local workforce development area is aware of TEGL 37-14 and will follow the procedures for developing a similar policy including key terminology, and have in place regarding working with customers who may be lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender. Local workforce development areas will also participate in any related training.

Yes X

20. **Uniform Guidance:** The local workforce development area is aware of TEGL 15-14 regarding Uniform Guidance.

Yes X

21. A. Briefly describe the local area board's policy and timetable for filling vacancies, replacing/reappointing individuals whose terms have come to an end. Include in your description any plans to fill the terms that will be expiring as of June 30, 2016.

When vacancies occur, the Board in collaboration with the Executive Director, shall solicit and receive nominations. The Governance Committee and Director shall consider the candidate nominations and make recommendations to the Executive Committee based upon meeting the federal and state Board composition requirements and the appropriateness and degree of fit for the needs of the Duluth's economy, targeted industry sectors and occupations, and businesses, workers, and job seekers. Final recommendations will be submitted to the Mayor for review and consideration. He/she will make appointments from the list of candidate nominations submitted by the Executive Committee and Director.

The term of membership shall be for three (3) years. The term of appointments will be staggered to the extent possible to ensure only a portion of the membership expire in a given year.

Any member may resign from the Board by sending a letter of resignation to the Chair of the Board. The resulting vacancy shall be filled according to the above process in

accordance with the resigned member's status or term or a new 3 year term may be provided, to be determined at the discretion of the Mayor. If a Board member retires during their term, they may serve out the remainder of their term and may be reappointed for one additional term. In no case shall retired members comprise more than 10% of total Board membership.

Recruitment efforts are underway to fill the two remaining private sector positions. The Duluth Workforce Development Board will be in compliance no later than June 30, 2016.

B. Is your local area board currently in compliance with WIOA?

Yes _____ No X

If No, what steps will be taken to bring your local area board into compliance by June 30, 2016?

The local area board will be in compliance no later than June 30, 2016.
Recruitment efforts are underway to fill the two remaining private sector positions.

C. Complete **Attachment C – Local Area Board Membership List**.

D. Complete **Attachment D – Local Area Board Committee List**.

22. Complete remaining portions of **Attachment B – Local Workforce Development Area Contacts**.

23. If applicable, complete **Attachment E - Local Workforce Development Area Sub-Grantee List**.

24. If applicable, complete **Attachment F - Local Workforce Development Area Non-WFC Program Service Delivery Location List**.

ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS

ASSURANCES

As a condition to the award of financial assistance from the Department of Labor under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and any other DEED/Workforce Development Employment and Training funds, the grant applicant assures that it will comply fully with the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions and other assurances of the following laws:

- **Accessibility** - [Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended](#) - Requires that federally funded program providers make their electronic information and technology accessible to people with disabilities;
- **ACORN** – [Funds may not be provided](#) to the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now, or any of its affiliates, subsidiaries, allied organizations or successors;
- **Audits** – [2 CFR 200.501](#) and [Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996](#) - organization-wide or program-specific audits shall be performed;
- **Buy American**- Buy American Act – award may not be expended unless the funds comply with [USC 41, Section 8301-8303](#);
- **Data Sharing** – [MN Access to Government Data](#), [MN Duties of Responsible Authority](#); [MN Access to Information](#); [MN Administrative Rules Data Practices](#); [DEED Policy – Data Practices](#);
- **Disability** - that there will be compliance with the [Architectural Barriers Act of 1968](#), [Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973](#), as amended, and the [Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990](#);
- **Drug-Free Workplace** – [Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988](#) – requires all organizations to maintain a drug-free workplace;
- **Equipment** – [2 CFR 200. 313](#), [200.439](#) – must receive prior approval for the purchase of any equipment with a per unit acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more, and a useful life of more than one year;
- **Fire Safety** – [15 USC 2225a](#) – ensure that all space for conferences, meetings, conventions or training seminars funded in whole or in part complies with the protection and control guidelines of the Hotel and Motel Fire Safety Act ([Public Law 101-391](#));
- **Fraud/Abuse** - that the provider has policies on fraud and abuse and will contact DEED for potential fraud and abuse issues; [20 CFR 667.630](#); [DEED Policy – Fraud Prevention and Abuse](#);
- **Health Benefits** – [Public Law 113-235, Division G, Sections 506 and 507](#) – ensure use of funds for health benefits coverage complies with the [Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2015](#);
- **Insurance** - that insurance coverage be provided for injuries suffered by participants in work-related activities where Minnesota's workers' compensation law is not applicable as required under Regulations [20 CFR 667.274](#);
- **Insurance** – [Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973](#) – provides that no Federal financial assistance to acquire, modernize or construct property may be provided in identified flood-prone communities in the United States, unless the community participates in the National Flood Insurance Program and flood insurance is purchased within 1 year of the identification;
- **Limited English** - [Executive Order 13166](#) - Improving access to services for persons with limited English proficiency;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Section 188 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act](#) (WIOA) - Requires applying nondiscrimination provisions in the administration of programs and activities for all eligible individuals, including individuals with disabilities;

- **Nondiscrimination** - [Section 188 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998](#) (WIA) - Requires applying nondiscrimination provisions in the administration of programs and activities for all eligible individuals, including individuals with disabilities;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended](#) – Prohibits discrimination on the bases of race, color, and national origin under any program receiving federal financial assistance;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended](#) - Prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin in employment;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008](#) - Prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of genetic information;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title V of the Older Americans Act of 1965](#) - Prohibits discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national original, age disability or political affiliation or beliefs in any program funded in part with Senior Community Services Employment Program funds;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended](#) - Requires applying nondiscrimination provisions, based on sex, in educational programs;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title I \(Employment\) Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#) - Prohibits state and local governments, from discriminating against qualified individuals with disabilities in job application procedures, hiring, firing, advancement, compensation, job training, and other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title II \(State and Local Governments\) Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#) - Prohibits qualified individuals with disabilities from discrimination in services, programs, and activities;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended](#) - Prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended](#) - Prohibits discrimination on the basis of age;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title 29 CFR Part 31](#) Nondiscrimination in federally-assisted programs of the Department of Labor, effectuation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title 29 CFR Part 32](#) Nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in programs and activities receiving or benefiting from federal assistance;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title 29 CFR Part 33](#) Enforcement of nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in programs or activities conducted by the Department of Labor;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title 29 CFR Part 35](#) Nondiscrimination on the basis of age in programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance from the Department of Labor;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title 29 CFR Part 37](#) Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity provisions of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Title 29 CFR Part 38](#) Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Executive Order 13160](#) Nondiscrimination on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, disability, religion, age, sexual orientation, and status as a parent in federally conducted education and training Programs;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [Executive Order 13279](#) - Nondiscrimination against grant seeking organizations on the basis of religion in the administration or distribution of federal financial assistance under social service programs, including grants, contracts, and loans;
- **Nondiscrimination** - [The Minnesota Human Rights Act of 1973, Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 363A](#) - Prohibits discrimination in employment and providing public services on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, natural origin, sex, marital status (employment only), disability, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, familial status

(employment only), citizenship, or age (employment only), and local human rights commission activity (employment only);

- **Nondiscrimination** - that collection and maintenance of data necessary to show compliance with the nondiscrimination provisions of WIA and [WIOA Section 188](#), as provided in the regulations implementing that section, will be completed;
- **Opportunity** – [Executive Order 12928](#) – encouraged to provide subcontracting/subgranting opportunities to Historically Black Colleges and Universities and other Minority Institutions and to Small Businesses Owned and Controlled by Socially and Economically Disadvantaged Individuals;
- **Personally Identifiable Information (PII)** – [Training and Guidance Letter 39-11](#) – must recognize and safeguard PII except where disclosure is allowed by prior written approval of the Grant Officer or by court order;
- **Procurement** – Uniform Administrative Requirements – [2 CFR 200-317-36](#) – all procurement transactions to be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open and free competition;
- **Publicity** – no funds shall be used for publicity or propaganda purposes, preparation or distribution or use of any kit, pamphlet, booklet, publication, radio, television or film presentation designed to support or defeat legislation pending before the Congress or any state/local legislature or legislative body, except in presentation to the Congress or any state/local legislature itself, or designed to support or defeat any proposed or pending regulation, administrative action, or order issued by the executive branch of any state or local government. Nor shall grant funds be used to pay the salary or expenses of any recipient or agent acting for such recipient, related to any activity designed to influence the enactment of legislation, appropriations regulation, administrative action, or Executive Order proposed or pending before the Congress, or any state government, state legislature or local legislature body other than for normal and recognized executive-legislative relationships or participation by an agency or officer of a state, local or tribal government in policymaking and administrative processes within the executive branch of that government;
- **Salary/Bonus** – [Public Law 113-235, Division G, Title I, Section 105](#) – none of the funds appropriated under the heading “Employment and Training” shall be used by a recipient or sub-recipient of such funds to pay the salary and bonuses of an individual, either as direct costs or indirect costs, at a rate in excess of [Executive Level II](#). Further clarification can be found in [TEGL 5-06](#);
- **Seat Belts** - [Executive Order 13043](#) – Increasing Seat Belt Use in the United States;
- **Text Messaging** – [Executive Order 13513](#) – encouraged to adopt and enforce policies that ban text messaging while driving company-owned or –rented vehicles or GOV or while driving POV when on official Government business or when performing any work for or on behalf of the Government;
- **Trafficking of Persons** – [2 CFR 180](#) – OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension – may not engage in severe forms of trafficking, procure a commercial sex act or use forced labor in the performance;
- **Veteran Priority of Service** - [Public Law 107-288: Jobs for Veterans Act](#) - Priority of service for veterans (including veterans, eligible spouses, widows and widowers of service members) in qualified job training programs;
- **Veterans** - [Public Law 112-56: Vow to Hire Heroes Act of 2011](#) - Establishes guidelines for service providers who are providing employment, training, academic or rehabilitation services for military veterans;
- **Veterans** - that veterans will be afforded employment and training activities authorized in WIA and WIOA Section 134, and the activities authorized in Chapters 41 and 42 of Title 38 US code, and in compliance with the veterans' priority established in the Jobs for Veterans Act. ([38 USC 4215](#)), U.S. Department of Labor, [Training and Employment Guidance Letter 5-03](#) and Minnesota's Executive Order 06-02;

- **Voter Registration** - that the required voter registration procedures described in [Minnesota Statutes 201.162](#) are enacted without the use of federal funds;
- **Voter Registration** – [52 USC 20501 – 20511](#) – National Voter Registration Act of 1993.

CERTIFICATIONS

By signing and submitting this plan, the local area board is certifying on behalf of itself and the subgrantee, where applicable:

- A. That this ***Regional and Local Workforce Development Area Plan*** was prepared and is in accordance with all applicable titles of the WIOA Act of 2014, Title V of the Older Americans Act, applicable Minnesota state statutes and that it is consistent with Minnesota's current and future state plans;
- B. that it has provided at least a thirty day period for public comment and input into the development of plan by members of the local area board and the public (including persons with disabilities) and has provided information regarding the plan and the planning process, including the plan and supporting documentation, in alternative formats when requested and that any comments representing disagreement with the plan are included with the local plan forwarded to DEED (as the Governor's representative) Section 118(c); Section 108 (d)
- C. that the public (including individuals with disabilities) have access to all of the local area board's and its components' meetings and information regarding the local area board's and its components' activities;
- D. that fiscal control and fund accounting procedures necessary to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for, funds paid through the allotments funded through the contract/master agreement issued by DEED have been established;
- E. that it is, and will maintain a certifiable local area board;
- F. that it will comply with the confidentiality requirements of WIA Section 136 (f)(3) and WIOA Section 116 (i)(3)
- G. that the respective contract/master agreement and all assurances will be followed;
- H. that it will ensure that no funds covered under the contract/master agreement are used to assist, promote, or deter union organizing;
- I. that this plan was developed in consultation with the local area board;
- J. that it acknowledges the specific performance standards for each of its programs and will strive to meet them;
- K. that the local area board members will not act in a manner that would create a conflict of interest as identified in 20 CFR 667.200(a)(4), including voting on any matter regarding the provision of service by that member or the entity that s/he represents and any matter that would provide a financial benefit to that member or to his or her immediate family;
- L. that local area board and staff are aware of local WorkForce Center services, and are working with and referring to the WorkForce Center services as appropriate;
- M. that all staff are provided the opportunity to participate in appropriate staff training;
- N. that, if applicable, the local area board must maintain the currency of its information in the System Award Management until submission of the final financial report or receive the final payment, whichever is later;
- O. that sponsored (in whole or in part) conferences are charged to the grantee as appropriate and allowable; and
- P. that funds are not used for the purpose of defraying costs of a conference unless it is directly and programmatically related to the purpose of the award.
- Q. that the local area board and its sub-grantees must also adhere to the same certifications and assurances that DEED must assure.

SIGNATURE PAGE

Local Workforce Development
Area Name

City of Duluth – Local Workforce Development Area 4

Local Area Board Name

Duluth Workforce Development Board

Name and Contact Information for the Local Area Board Chair:

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Name | <u>Mary Ferguson</u> |
| Title | <u>Director of Recruitment and Staffing Support</u> |
| Organization | <u>Essentia Health</u> |
| Address 1 | <u>407 East 3rd Street</u> |
| Address 2 | <u></u> |
| City, State, ZIP Code | <u>Duluth, MN 55805</u> |
| Phone | <u>218-786-5543</u> |
| E-mail | <u>mary.ferguson@essentiahealth.org</u> |

Name and Contact Information for the Chief Local Elected Official(s):

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Name | <u>Emily Larson</u> |
| Title | <u>Mayor</u> |
| Organization | <u>City of Duluth</u> |
| Address 1 | <u>411 W. 1st Street</u> |
| Address 2 | <u></u> |
| City, State, ZIP Code | <u>Duluth, MN 55802</u> |
| Phone | <u>218-730-5230</u> |
| E-mail | <u>elarson@Duluthmn.gov</u> |

We, the undersigned, attest that this submittal is the Program Year 2016-2017 Local Plan for our Workforce Development Board and Local Workforce Development Area and hereby certify that this Local Plan has been prepared as required, and is in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws, rules and regulations.

Local Area Board Chair

Name Mary Ferguson

Title Local Area Board Chair

Signature 

Date May 3, 2016

Chief Local Elected Official

Name Emily Larson

Title Mayor

Signature 

Date 5/6/16

REGIONAL OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**Regional Workforce Development Area**

Regional Workforce Development Area 2

Local Workforce Development Area

Local Workforce Development Areas 3 and 4 (City of Duluth & NE MN)

| MEMBER | ORGANIZATION |
|---|---|
| Mary Ferguson, Duluth WDB Chair | Essentia Health |
| Ian Vincent, Duluth WDB Member | APEX |
| Emily Edison, Duluth WDB Member | SOAR Career Solutions |
| Patty Fleege, Duluth WDB Member | Adult Basic Education (ABE) |
| Brad Vieths, Duluth WDB Member | ISD 709 Duluth Public Schools & Lake Superior Carl Perkins Consortium |
| Bud Stone, NE WDB Chair | Grand Rapids Chamber of Commerce |
| Allen Rasmussen, NE MN WDB Member | Higher Education |
| Roland Root, NE MN WDB Member | Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) |
| Betsy Harmon, NE MN & Duluth WDB Member | State of Minnesota – Job Service |
| Stan Paczynski, NE MN WDB Member | Labor Representative |

LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA CONTACTS

| ROLE | Contact Name | Phone | Email | Reports to (name only) |
|--|--|---------------------|--|------------------------|
| Rapid Response Liaison for Mass Layoffs (see section C.2.D.) | Paula Reed, Manager | 218-730-5241 | preed@Duluthmn.gov | Heather Rand |
| Equal Opportunity Officer (see section D.3.B.) | City of Duluth Equal Opportunity Officer | | In process of being hired | Mayor Emily Larson |
| Program Complaint Officer (see section D.5.B.) | Paula Reed, Manager | 218-730-5241 | preed@Duluthmn.gov | Heather Rand |
| Records Management/Records Retention Coordinator (see section D.16.C.) | Jeff Cox, City Clerk | 218-730-5249 | Jcox@Duluthmn.gov | Jim Filby Williams |
| ADA Coordinator (see section D.22.) | City of Duluth Equal Opportunity Officer | | In process of being hired | Mayor Emily Larson |
| Data Practices Coordinator (see section D.22.) | Allison Lutterman, Deputy City Attorney | 218-730-5490 | alutterman@Duluthmn.gov | Gunnar Johnson |
| English as Second Language (ESL) Coordinator (see section D.22.) | Patricia Fleege, Adult Basic Education Manager | 218-336-8790 x 4102 | Patricia.fleege@isd709.org | Amy Starzecki |

Official Name of WorkForce Center: Minnesota WorkForce Center Duluth

| ROLE | Contact Name | Phone | Email | Reports to (name only) |
|--|--|---------------------|--|------------------------|
| Site Representative | Betsy Harmon, Job Service/Business Service Manager | 218-302-8404 | Betsy.harmon@state.mn.us | Dave Niermann |
| Job Service Manager | Betsy Harmon | 218-302-8404 | Betsy.harmon@state.mn.us | Dave Niermann |
| Vocational Rehabilitation Services Manager | Jeri Werner, Area Manager | 218-302-8430 | Jeri.lynn.werner@state.mn.us | Roland Root |
| State Services for the Blind Manager | Mike Neumann Counseling Supervisor 4 | 651-539-2348 | michael.newman@state.mn.us | |
| Local Workforce Development Area Director | Paula Reed Manager, Workforce Development | 218-730-5241 | preed@Duluthmn.gov | Heather Rand |
| Adult Basic Education (ABE) | Patricia Fleege, Adult Basic Education Manager | 218-336-8790 x 4102 | Patricia.fleege@isd709.org | Amy Starzecki |

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|--------------|--|-----------------|
| Carl Perkins Post-Secondary Manager | James Schwarzbauer, Carl Perkins Coordinator at Lake Superior College | 218-733-5944 | j.schwarzbauer@lsc.edu | Michael Seymour |
| Adult | Paula Reed, Manager | 218-730-5241 | preed@duluthmn.gov | Heather Rand |
| Dislocated Worker | Paula Reed, Manager | 218-730-5241 | preed@duluthmn.gov | Heather Rand |
| Youth | Paula Reed, Manager | 218-730-5241 | preed@duluthmn.gov | Heather Rand |

LOCAL AREA BOARD MEMBERSHIP LIST

Regional Workforce Development Area

Regional Workforce Development Area 2

Local Workforce Development Area

Local Workforce Development Area 4 – City of Duluth

| MEMBER | POSITION/ORGANIZATION | TERM ENDS |
|--|--|--|
| REPRESENTATIVES OF BUSINESS IN LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA (must be majority) | Mary Ferguson – Essentia Kim Hall – Ascena Marla Halvorson - St. Luke's Mark Ketterer - AAR Nicole Johnson - Allele Cindy Luoma - Jamar Susan Gibson - LHB Brandon Hendrickson - RSI Jay Ott - Admax Ian Vincent - APEX Anna Tanski - Visit Duluth Mark Swanson - Kelly Services Sandy Kolasinski - Grandma's Restaurant Company PLUS TWO by June 30, 2016 | November 2017 November 2017 November 2017 November 2017 November 2017 November 2018 November 2018 November 2018 November 2017 November 2018 November 2018 November 2018 November 2018 November 2019 |
| LABOR & COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS (20% Minimum and 2 or more nominated by state labor federations and one joint labor-management apprenticeship program labor organization or training director) | Rachel Loeffler Kemp- AFL/CIO Community Services Jeremy Browen, Carpenters Union Dick Barlage - Sheetmetal Workers Training Center Paul Pedersen – MACV Emily Edison - SOAR | November 2018 November 2018 November 2017 November 2017 November 2019 |
| EDUCATION & TRAINING (Required: ABE; Higher Education) | Patty Fleege – ABE Brad Veiths - ISD 709 Mike Seymour – Lake Superior College Carrie Taylor Kemp – The College of St. Scholastica | November 2019 November 2019 November 2019 November 2017 |
| GOVERNMENT (Required: Economic Development; Job Service; Rehabilitation) | Monica Haynes - UMD Bureau of Business & Economic Research Betsy Harmon - Job Service Jeri Werner – VRS Amanda Yates – St. Louis County | November 2017 November 2018 November 2019 November 2019 |

CONTACT INFORMATION

| NAME | ADDRESS/PHONE/EMAIL |
|---|---|
| CHAIR: Mary Ferguson, Essentia Health | 407 East 3 rd Street, Duluth, MN 55805 218-786-5543 mary.ferguson@essentiahealth.org |
| VICE CHAIR: Nicole Johnson, Allete Inc. | 30 West Superior Street, Duluth, MN 55802 218-723-7557 nrjohnson@allete.com |
| SECRETARY: Monica Haynes, University of Minnesota Duluth Bureau of Business & Economic Research | 11 East Superior Street, Suite 210, Duluth, MN 55802 218-726-7895 mrhaynes@d.umn.edu |

LOCAL AREA BOARD SUBCOMMITTEE LIST

Regional Workforce Development Area

Regional Workforce Development Area 2

Local Workforce Development Area

Local Workforce Development Area 4 – City of Duluth

| Committee Name | Objective/Purpose |
|--|--|
| Executive Committee | <p>The work of the executive committee revolves around the following key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set agendas for the WIB meetings • Coordinate development of strategic planning process; monitor progress toward goals • Handle urgent issues and act on behalf of the WIB between board meetings as needed • Act as liaison to the WIB Director • Recommend nominees for officer positions and direct Executive Director to make necessary contacts. Present final officer nominations for board approval. • Review and make final recommendation for new members to the Mayor |
| Governance Committee | <p>The work of the governance committee revolves around the following key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination of new board member recruitment and orientation • Development and administration of policies and governing documents (e.g. Bylaws, Conflict of interest policy, board calendar, member roster, etc.) • Board evaluation and assessment; recommendations to Executive Committee regarding necessary trainings and facilitation. Committee would not be doing trainings and facilitations, but would be responsible for recommending those actions as gaps or needs are identified based on evaluation/assessment results |
| Community Engagement, Marketing & Outreach Committee | <p>The work of the community engagement, marketing and outreach committee revolves around the following key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information and promote the WFC to individuals, businesses, community organizations, government organizations and others • Assist businesses in understanding and taking advantage of opportunities to improve profitability and capabilities by sponsoring information sharing events, doing outreach to businesses, and through involvement in professional organizations • Coordinate a Speakers' Bureau to promote and educate about the Workforce Council, Workforce Center(s) and community resources regarding skilled workforce development |

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Career Pathways Committee | <p>The work of the research and sector partnerships committee revolves around the following key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene business and industry sector leaders, educators and community based organizations to identify and create sector-based, career pathway programs for skill development. • Work to create a bridge between educational institutions, business and industry by identifying skills needs and communicating them to educational partners. (Career Pathways) • Support initiatives which increase the labor supply for high demand industries, both current and future, in cooperation with state and local economic development partners. • Provide support to existing or emerging business/industry clusters, and to help generate and implement strategies that expand these types of business in the area. |
| Youth/Education Committee | <p>The work of the youth/education committee revolves around the following key areas under the direction of the Local Board. The committee may:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Recommend policy direction to the Local Board for the design, development, and implementation of programs that benefit all youth; b. Recommend the design of a comprehensive community workforce development system to ensure a full range of services and opportunities for all youth, including disconnected youth; c. Recommend ways to leverage resources and coordinate services among schools, public programs, and community-based organizations serving youth; d. Recommend ways to coordinate youth services and recommend eligible youth service providers; e. Provide on-going leadership and support for continuous quality improvement for local youth programs; f. Assist with planning, operational, and other issues relating to the provision of services to youth; and g. If so delegated by the Local Board after consultation with the CEO, oversee eligible youth providers, as well as other youth program oversight responsibilities. |
| One Stop Committee | <p>The work of the one-stop committee revolves around the following key areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and monitor the flow of One-Stop services and ensure implementation of WIOA related to the One-Stop system. • Guide and direct One-Stop operations to enhance the quality of customer service, meet the needs of the community, and ensure continuous improvement of the One-Stop system. • Provide data that supports and facilitates decision-making. |

LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA SUB-GRANTEE LIST

Regional Workforce Development Area

Regional Workforce Development Area 2

Local Workforce Development Area

Local Workforce Development Area 4 – City of Duluth

| Name of Sub-Grantee | Services Provided | Funding Source | Sub-Grantee located in which WFC? | If not in WFC, provide Address, City, State, ZIP Code |
|-------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| SOAR Career Solutions | Recruitment, career navigation services, case management including development of personalized career and educational action plans, soft skills and job search skills, resumes and applications. Career readiness training, referrals to other needed supports, job search and retention services. The Integrated Resource Team model will be utilized to reduce clients' barriers to success and ensure the efficient use of limited resources. | Pathways to Prosperity Grant 2016 | | 205 W 2nd St #101 Duluth, MN 55802 |
| Community Action Duluth | Recruitment, career navigation services, case management including development of personalized career and educational action plans, soft skills and job search skills, resumes and applications. Career readiness training, referrals to other needed supports, job search and retention services. The Integrated Resource Team model will be utilized to reduce clients' barriers to success and ensure the efficient use of limited resources. | Pathways to Prosperity Grant 2016 | | 2424 W 5th St. #102 Duluth, MN 55806 |
| Lake Superior College | Orientation for program participants, 150 hour training for Health Services Certificate | Pathways to Prosperity Grant 2016 | | 2101 Trinity Rd Duluth, MN 55811 |
| Adult Basic Education | Bridging & Integrated Instruction | Pathways to Prosperity Grant 2016 | | 215 N 1st Ave E Duluth, MN 55802 |

LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA NON-WFC PROGRAM SERVICE DELIVERY LOCATION LIST

Regional Workforce Development Area

Regional Workforce Development Area 2

Local Workforce Development Area

Local Workforce Development Area 4 – City of Duluth

| Name and Location (City) | Program Service Delivered |
|---|------------------------------------|
| | |
| Area Learning Center – Duluth MN | Youth Services |
| ISD 709 – Duluth Public Schools – Duluth MN | Youth Services |
| Lake Superior College – Duluth MN | Adult & Dislocated Worker Services |

LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREA KEY INDUSTRIES IN REGIONAL ECONOMY

KEY INDUSTRIES

Healthcare and Social Assistance: With 17,675 jobs at 339 firms, healthcare and social assistance is the largest employing industry in Local Workforce Development Area 4 (LWDA 4), accounting for 29.6 percent of total jobs in the city. The amount of jobs in this industry has increased recently with 198 jobs added since 2010 and 45 jobs in the previous year.

Retail Trade, Accommodation & Food Service: The next largest industries in LWDA 4 are retail trade and accommodation and food services. After seeing job gains in the past 5 years, these two industries made up nearly 21 percent of all the jobs in the region.

Construction/Skilled Trades: The construction industry also saw strong gains from 2010 to 2014 as it grew by over 17 percent, and added 340 jobs in the local area.

Professional, Scientific & Technical Services: Another high growth and high wage industry for Duluth is Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services. With gains of more than 550 jobs since 2010, this sector is an important aspect of the city's economy.

Other important industries in the city include educational services, public administration, manufacturing, finance and insurance, other services, and administrative support and waste management services. Twelve of the 18 main industries in the region added jobs since 2010, with gains in transportation, retail trade, accommodation, and health care. In contrast, employers in the city saw job declines in management of companies, administrative support and waste management services, manufacturing, public administration, educational services, and arts, entertainment, and recreation (see Table 13).

| NAICS Industry Title | 2014 Annual Data | | | | Avg. Annual Wage | 2010-2014 | | 2013-2014 | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Number of Firms | Number of Jobs | Percent of Jobs | Total Payroll | | Change in Jobs | Percent Change | Change in Jobs | Percent Change |
| Total, All Industries | 2,654 | 59,647 | 100.0% | \$2,602,372,903 | \$43,628 | +1,414 | +2.4% | +666 | +1.1% |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 339 | 17,675 | 29.6% | \$897,531,945 | \$50,752 | +198 | +1.1% | +45 | +0.3% |
| Retail Trade | 433 | 6,418 | 10.8% | \$148,042,036 | \$23,036 | +37 | +0.6% | -3 | 0.0% |
| Accommodation & Food Services | 246 | 6,033 | 10.1% | \$87,903,994 | \$14,560 | +278 | +4.8% | +72 | +1.2% |
| Educational Services | 84 | 5,207 | 8.7% | \$247,160,869 | \$47,476 | -38 | -0.7% | +72 | +1.4% |
| Public Administration | 63 | 3,667 | 6.1% | \$215,213,735 | \$58,708 | -80 | -2.1% | -18 | -0.5% |
| Professional & Technical Services | 245 | 2,672 | 4.5% | \$179,414,552 | \$67,028 | +564 | +26.8% | +184 | +7.4% |
| Manufacturing | 95 | 2,586 | 4.3% | \$145,758,140 | \$56,368 | -101 | -3.8% | -20 | -0.8% |
| Construction | 189 | 2,240 | 3.8% | \$128,124,621 | \$57,044 | +340 | +17.9% | +216 | +10.7% |
| Finance and Insurance | 156 | 2,207 | 3.7% | \$105,624,723 | \$47,840 | +31 | +1.4% | +58 | +2.7% |
| Other Services | 274 | 2,042 | 3.4% | \$44,804,016 | \$21,944 | +157 | +8.3% | +24 | +1.2% |
| Admin. Support & Waste Mgmt. | 94 | 1,983 | 3.3% | \$49,953,818 | \$25,168 | -162 | -7.6% | -72 | -3.5% |
| Transportation & Warehousing | 68 | 1,389 | 2.3% | \$79,019,894 | \$56,836 | +186 | +15.5% | +70 | +5.3% |
| Wholesale Trade | 101 | 1,195 | 2.0% | \$61,096,524 | \$51,116 | +59 | +5.2% | +9 | +0.8% |
| Arts, Entertainment & Recreation | 70 | 1,187 | 2.0% | \$21,090,877 | \$17,732 | -11 | -0.9% | -43 | -3.5% |
| Information | 51 | 976 | 1.6% | \$48,930,084 | \$50,128 | N/A | N/A | -66 | -6.3% |
| Utilities | 7 | 777 | 1.3% | \$73,550,322 | \$94,900 | +81 | +11.6% | +32 | +4.3% |
| Real Estate, Rental & Leasing | 110 | 752 | 1.3% | \$21,800,895 | \$28,964 | +67 | +9.8% | +75 | +11.1% |
| Management of Companies | 22 | 607 | 1.0% | \$46,125,159 | \$75,920 | -44 | -6.8% | +40 | +7.1% |

Source: DEED Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW)

DISTINGUISHING INDUSTRIES

Local Area 4 stands out in the state for its higher concentrations of employment in health care, retail, and manufacturing. It also has the highest location quotients in national security and international affairs, broadcasting, and hospitals. Utilities and transportation equipment manufacturing are also sectors with concentrated employment and high paying wages in LWDA 4 (see Table 14).

| Table 14. Local Area 4, Distinguishing Industries, 2014 | | | | | Avg. Annual Wages | Location Quotient |
|--|---------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| NAICS Industry Title | NAICS Code | Number of Firms | Number of Jobs | Total Payroll | | |
| Total, All Industries | 0 | 2,654 | 59,647 | \$2,602,372,903 | \$43,630 | 1.0 |
| National Security & International Affairs | 928 | 3 | 314 | \$19,698,434 | \$62,734 | 6.2 |
| Broadcasting (except Internet) | 515 | 15 | 385 | \$15,032,932 | \$39,047 | 3.2 |
| Hospitals | 622 | 7 | 7,821 | \$464,296,639 | \$59,365 | 3.0 |
| Textile Product Mills | 314 | 5 | 158 | \$5,046,336 | \$31,939 | 2.9 |
| Electronics & Appliance Stores | 443 | 18 | 441 | \$15,694,010 | \$35,587 | 2.6 |
| Utilities | 221 | 7 | 777 | \$73,550,322 | \$94,659 | 2.5 |
| Nursing & Residential Care Facilities | 623 | 126 | 5,121 | \$117,357,142 | \$22,917 | 2.1 |
| Transportation Equipment Manufacturing | 336 | 7 | 478 | \$30,198,959 | \$63,178 | 1.9 |
| Administration of Housing Programs | 925 | 2 | 107 | \$5,230,363 | \$48,882 | 1.8 |
| Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores | 448 | 79 | 753 | \$11,866,688 | \$15,759 | 1.6 |
| Source: DEED Quarterly Census of Employment & Wages (QCEW) | | | | | | |