

Northwest Workforce Council

Regional Workforce Plan

2020-2024



Whatcom,
San Juan,
Island
and
Skagit
Counties

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Executive Summary

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) (the “Opportunity” Act) authorizes the one-stop American Job Center (WorkSource) service delivery system and identifies six core programs. The core programs are:

- WIOA Title I: three programs administered by Department of Labor (DOL)
 - Adult;
 - Dislocated Worker;
 - Young Adult;
- WIOA Title II: Adult Education and Literacy Act programs administered by the Department of Education (DoED);
- WIOA Title III: Wagner-Peyser Act employment services administered by DOL; and
- WIOA Title IV Rehabilitation Act programs administered by DoED

Additionally, in Washington State, the governor has elected to include TANF as a required partner in the WorkSource centers.

Each program was established to fulfill certain purposes for specific populations of customers. In most cases, these purposes and eligible populations are specified by state or federal statute. Rules established by agencies provide greater specificity to guide staff in carrying out their programs. Although these program designs may make sense in and of themselves, when viewed in combination, they often create a confusing array of government services to the customers they are intended to serve. The integration of these programs into the workforce development system is to improve customer access and to better coordinate the delivery of workforce development services.

WIOA requires Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB) to engage partners and stakeholders in the completion of a local, multi-year, regional workforce plan. This plan is focused on the broad workforce system, as comprised of individual programs (both required and desired) but is larger than the sum of those parts. Taken together and functioning together as an integrated system of programs and providers, the Council’s workforce plan articulates a vision and goals for that system.

Put simply, Washington’s workforce development system is an integrated network of services, programs and investments with a shared goal of improving the skills of the state workforce. This network strives to create the workforce needed by business and industry. It further helps potential job candidates, particularly low-income youth and adults and displaced workers, overcome obstacles to successful employment. These services are delivered through the WorkSource Centers, the state’s one-stop delivery system. Primary funding for WorkSource Center operations and many of the core and intensive services provided at WorkSource are underwritten through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Titles I-IV.

At a WorkSource Center, an individual can find job openings, receive other job search assistance, and attend workshops that can improve skills and employability. Qualified individuals can find assistance with specific training in high-demand occupations and employers can get help with their workforce needs including job listing, recruitment, and training for their workforce. Other services available through these centers include: veteran services, WorkFirst, Trade Act programs, access to training programs, disability services, and farm worker assistance, among others.

Northwest Workforce Council (Council) (NWC), in consultation with local elected officials, oversees the WorkSource (one-stop) system programs and WIOA Title 1-B employment and training programs, coordinates local area workforce development services, and provides expertise and demand-driven workforce services to employers and job seekers in Whatcom, Skagit, Island, and San Juan Counties. Council members chart an important course to help local businesses, workers and communities realize a more prosperous future.

The Plan is a “living” document. The Council and its workforce system partners consult it often, revise course as necessary, and mark milestones on the way to realizing a shared vision for the region’s prosperity.

The Plan assesses local industry and business talent needs and sets forth strategies for the region’s workforce development system that remain consistent with the state’s workforce system goals in *“Talent and Prosperity for All.”* It describes how the Council continues with already initiated work to enhance services and outcomes for customers, creating opportunities for people to support themselves and their families, and including the pursuit of alignment and operating efficiencies within the local workforce development system.

The workforce plan reflects a deep commitment by the Council to the economic vitality of the community and a confidence in the ability to redesign and re-energize the workforce development system to meet evolving talent demands in local and global economies.

Northwest Workforce Council
Whatcom, Skagit, Island & San Juan Counties
The 2020-2024 Regional Workforce Plan

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SECTION I

REGIONAL DESIGNATION

Northwest Workforce Development Area III

Northwest Workforce Council, Fiscal Agent

Serving Whatcom, Skagit, Island and San Juan Counties of Washington State



Local Workforce Development Board Contact Information:

Gay L. Dubigk, Chief Executive Officer

Northwest Workforce Council

PO Box 2009

Bellingham, WA 98227-2009

360.676.3209

gdubigk@workforcenorthwest.org

www.nwboard.org

Local Plan Writing Team

Northwest Workforce Council

Bellingham Technical College

Whatcom Community College

Skagit Valley College

Employment Security Department

DSHS Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

DSHS Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF/BFET)

Secondary Vocational Programs (Educational Service District #189)

Department of Services for the Blind

AARP Older Worker Program

Community Action of Skagit County



SECTION II

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

Overview

The counties of Island, San Juan, Skagit and Whatcom form the Northwest Area of Washington State's workforce development system. Geographically located in the far northwest corner of the state, the area borders Canada to the north and Snohomish County to the south. With an estimated total population of 464,017 in 2020 and total area of 5562 square miles, of which 25% is water, the approximate population density is 111/sq. mi. This may be somewhat misleading as much of Whatcom and Skagit Counties contain the Western half of the Cascade Mountains and much of the population clusters around the I-5 corridor. Its character remains distinctly rural, with views of the mountains and the Salish Sea around every corner.

Skagit, Whatcom and Island Counties are part of the I-5 corridor linking two international, metropolitan cities, Seattle, Washington, and Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. The area's economy benefits from this location by increased trade and commerce and additional job opportunities for residents who choose to commute to jobs outside their residential areas.

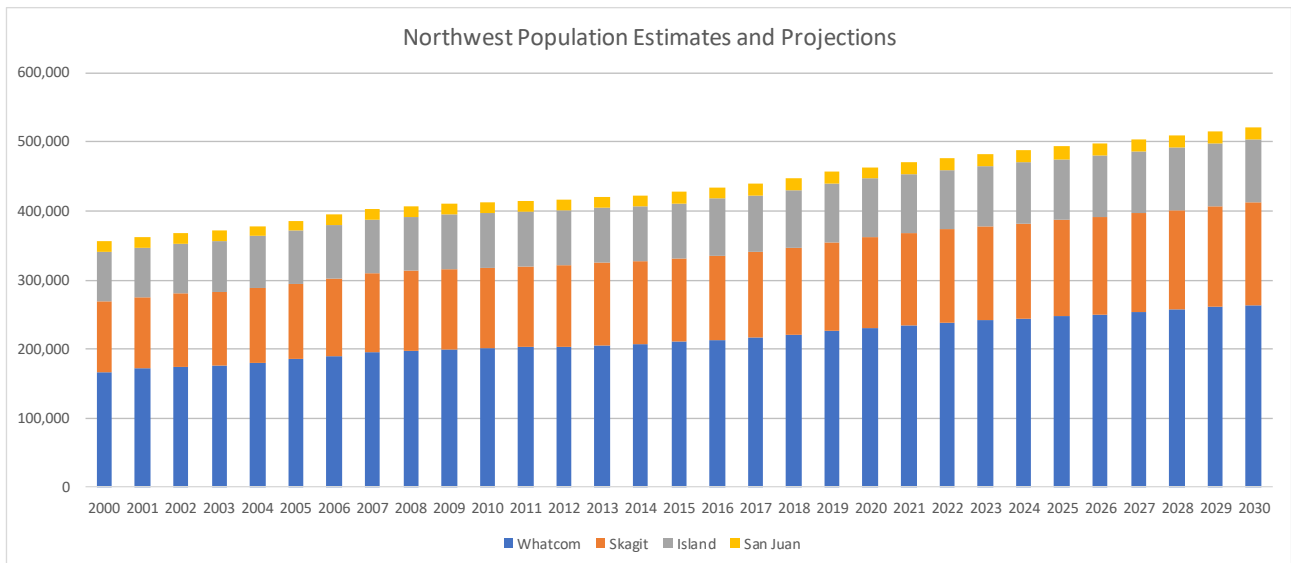
The Northwest region is known for its abundance of natural resources, exceptional scenery, rural settings, and quality of life. These characteristics are key factors for attracting and retaining businesses, workers, families and retirees. The desirable environment and close proximity to the two major metropolitan areas, Vancouver, BC to the north and Seattle to the south, contributes to growth in population, tourism, recreation, service, and wholesale and retail trade. Over six million people live within 100 miles of the Northwest workforce region.

The presence of a nationally recognized four-year university, two community colleges, a tribal college, and a technical college, and a diverse economy which includes a Naval air station, four oil refineries, an aluminum smelter, and notable retail, tourist and recreation industries provide

stability to the area. It has a strong agricultural base with a growing value-added food manufacturing sector which includes craft beer, spirits, cheese, and baked goods which add to the cultural quality of life and tourism potential. Continuing to underlie this economy is a strong and growing manufacturing sector, which in addition to petroleum and aluminum, includes aerospace providers, marine manufacturers, and a large variety of other niche manufacturers, creating a well-rounded economic base.

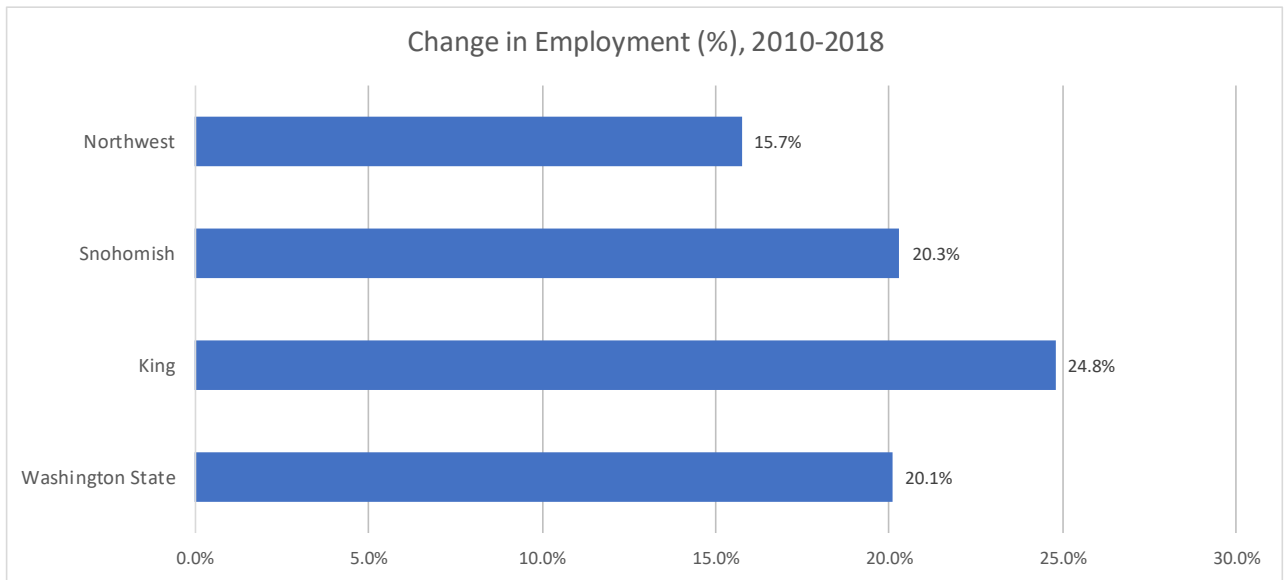
Growth

The Northwest has experienced consistent growth in population, employment, and GDP since recovering from the 2008 recession. In 2015, population growth recovered from the recession period dip and has a projected annual growth rate of above 1%. This is a critical factor in supporting economic growth, especially in the construction sector.

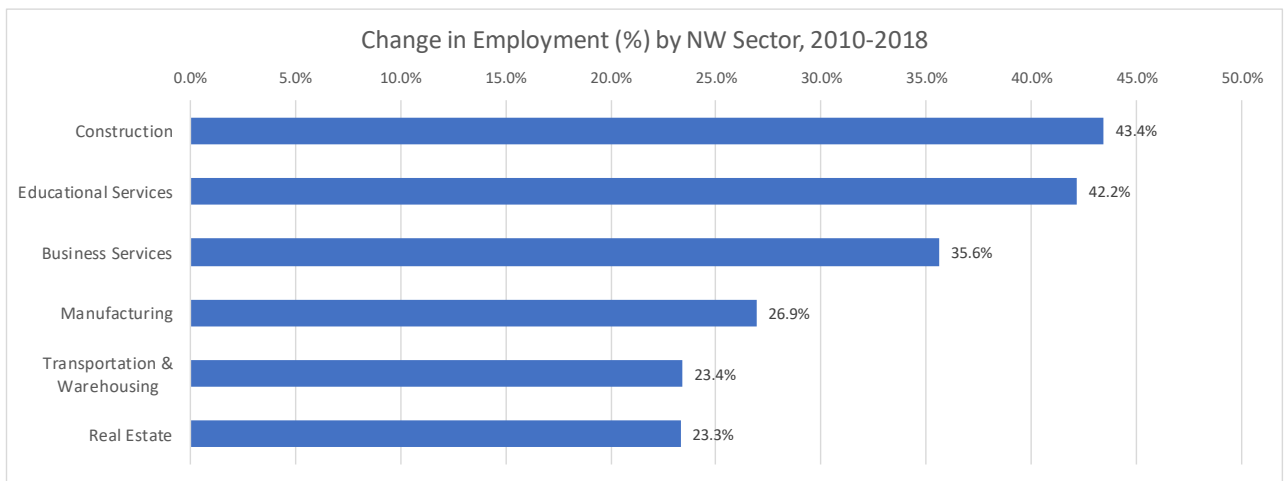


Source: Washington State Employment Security Department

The region’s economy continues to grow and, in most sectors, has exceeded the pre-recession levels. After a decline in total employment during the recession, employment increased by 15.7% percent between 2010 and 2018. Proportionately, the Northwest endured greater job losses during the recession than neighboring Snohomish and King counties or Washington State as a whole, and employment growth still trails those areas overall. Within certain sectors, however, employment growth has significantly outpaced the average, notably construction, educational services, business services, and manufacturing.



Source: Washington State Employment Security Department



Source: Washington State Employment Security Department

Identifying Key Sectors

While growth, both past and predicted, is a major factor taken into consideration in determining the key industry sectors for a region, other elements must also be taken into account. Overall size of employment in the industry, the ability to earn a sustaining wage, career path/advancement opportunities, qualitative validation, and local training capacity to meet the skill needs of regional employers have all been considered in our analysis.

After examining these factors, the key industry sectors for the Northwest region remain: Advanced Manufacturing, Construction, and Health and Allied Services.

Key Industry Sectors for the Northwest

1. Manufacturing (Advanced Manufacturing)

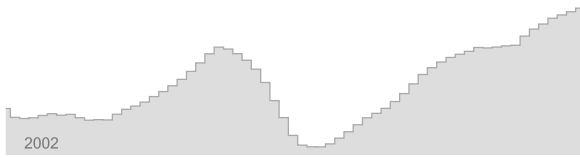
- 1.a. Petroleum Products Manufacturing
- 1.b. Wood Product Manufacturing
- 1.c. Primary Metal Manufacturing
- 1.d. Food Manufacturing
- 1.e. Machinery Manufacturing
- 1.f. Transportation Equipment Manufacturing (including aerospace and marine)

2. Construction

3. Health Care

Key Sector Snapshot: Manufacturing

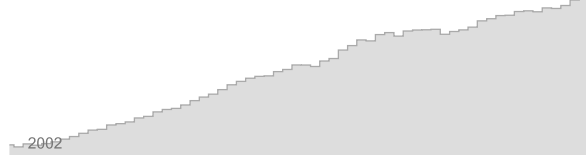
EMPLOYMENT



18,186

Regional employment / **13,147,370** in the nation

WAGES



\$65,089

Avg Wages per Worker / **\$69,449** in the nation

2.2% ↑

Avg Ann % Change Last 10 Years / **+0.5%** in the U.S.



9.9% ↑

% of Total Employment / **8.3%** in the U.S.

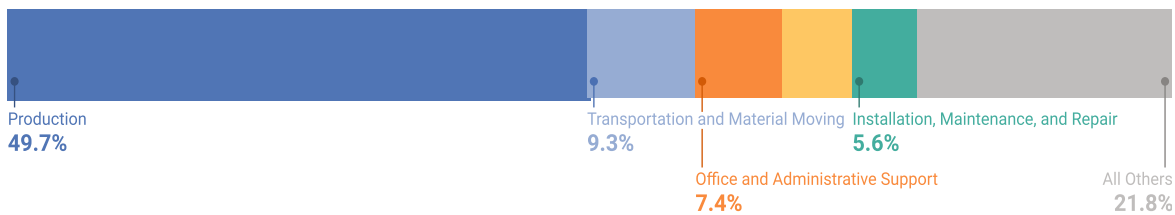


2.7% ↑

Avg Ann % Change Last 10 Years / **+2.6%** in the U.S.



TOP OCCUPATION GROUPS



TOP INDUSTRIES

Avg Ann % Change in Employment, Last 10 Years

3.5% ↑



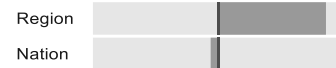
Food Manufacturing

3.2% ↑



Wood Product Manufacturing

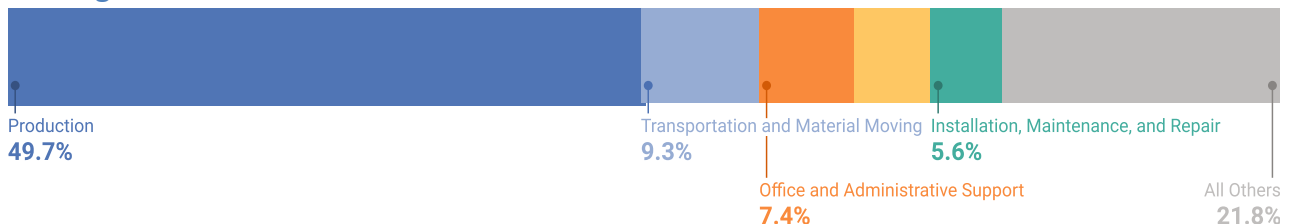
2.6% ↑



Petroleum and Coal Products Manufacturing

Source: JobsEQ®, <http://www.chmuraecon.com/jobseq>
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Staffing Pattern



6-digit Occupation	Employment	Avg Annual Wages	Annual Demand
Team Assemblers	885	\$38,400	80
First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	761	\$69,800	73
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	544	\$34,500	74
Machinists	490	\$47,900	52
Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders	470	\$33,400	54
Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers	447	\$31,500	51
Petroleum Pump System Operators, Refinery Operators, and Gaugers	433	\$58,700	40
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	416	\$46,100	39
Woodworking Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Except Sawing	360	\$35,700	40
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	345	\$73,500	35
Remaining Component Occupations	13,009	\$58,800	1,312
Total	18,186		

Source: JobsEQ®, <http://www.chmuraecon.com/jobseq>
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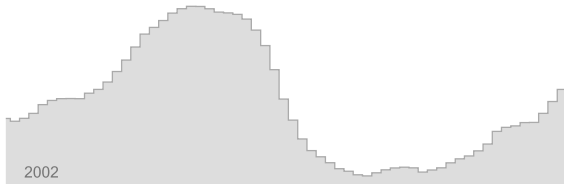
POSTSECONDARY PROGRAMS LINKED TO MANUFACTURING

Program	Awards
Bellingham Technical College	
Engineering Technology, General	72
Instrumentation Technology/Technician	22
Mechanical Drafting and Mechanical Drafting CAD/CADD	10
Welding Technology/Welder	63
Skagit Valley College	
Food Science	26
Manufacturing Engineering Technology/Technician	7
Welding Technology/Welder	55
Western Washington University	
Chemistry, General	42
Operations Management and Supervision	73
Whatcom Community College	
Prepress/Desktop Publishing and Digital Imaging Design	20

Source: JobsEQ®

Key Sector Snapshot: Construction

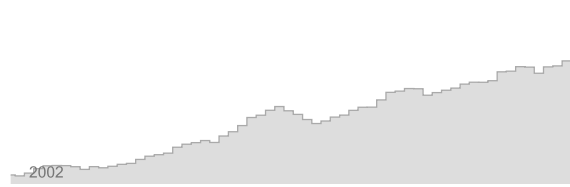
EMPLOYMENT



15,709

Regional employment / **9,135,425** in the nation

WAGES

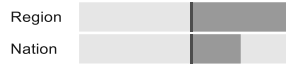


\$64,851

Avg Wages per Worker / **\$59,168** in the nation

2.2% ↑

Avg Ann % Change
Last 10 Years / **+1.1%**
in the U.S.



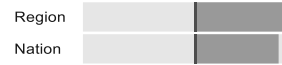
8.6%

% of Total Employment
/ **5.7%** in the U.S.



3.3% ↑

Avg Ann % Change
Last 10 Years / **+2.8%**
in the U.S.



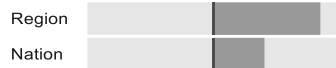
TOP OCCUPATION GROUPS



TOP INDUSTRIES

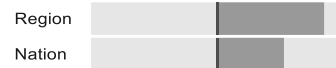
Avg Ann % Change in Employment, Last 10 Years

2.3% ↑



Specialty Trade Contractors

1.6% ↑



Construction of Buildings

3.0% ↑



Heavy and Civil Engineering
Construction

Source: JobsEQ®, <http://www.chmuraecon.com/jobseq>
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STAFFING PATTERNS:



6-digit Occupation	Employment	Avg Annual Wages	Annual Demand
Construction Laborers	2,244	\$47,400	266
Carpenters	1,915	\$57,900	196
Electricians	1,177	\$60,400	151
First-line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	1,053	\$80,600	118
Construction Managers	809	\$96,200	67
Painters, Construction and Maintenance	656	\$41,300	61
Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	570	\$61,800	72
Office Clerks, General	494	\$41,700	60
Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators	443	\$66,000	57
Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	341	\$58,600	41
Remaining Component Occupations	5,981	\$59,300	682
Total	15,709		

Source: JobsEQ®, <http://www.chmuraecon.com/jobseq>
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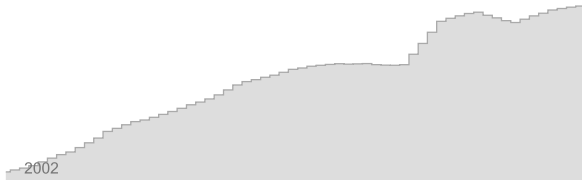
POSTSECONDARY PROGRAMS LINKED TO CONSTRUCTION:

Program	Awards
Bellingham Technical College	
Building/Home/Construction Inspection/Inspector	28
Electrician	49
General Office Occupations and Clerical Services	55
Heating, Air Conditioning, Ventilation and Refrigeration Maintenance Technology/Technician	13
Welding Technology/Welder	63
Skagit Valley College	
Welding Technology/Welder	55
Western Washington University	
Business Administration and Management, General	180
Operations Management and Supervision	73
Whatcom Community College	
Accounting Technology/Technician and Bookkeeping	143

Source: JobsEQ®

Key Sector Snapshot: Healthcare

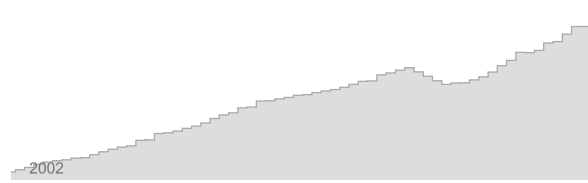
EMPLOYMENT



23,791

Regional employment / **22,890,899** in the nation

WAGES



\$50,237

Avg Wages per Worker / **\$52,428** in the nation

1.6% ↑

Avg Ann % Change
Last 10 Years / **+2.1%**
in the U.S.



13.0%

% of Total Employment
/ **14.4%** in the U.S.

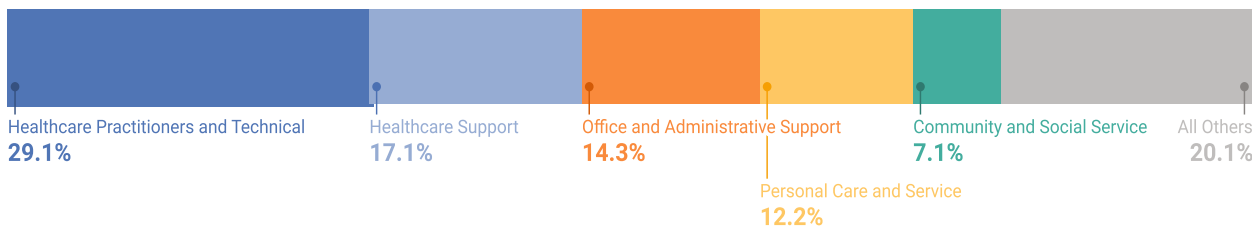


3.0% ↑

Avg Ann % Change
Last 10 Years / **+1.9%**
in the U.S.



TOP OCCUPATION GROUPS



TOP INDUSTRIES

Avg Ann % Change in Employment, Last 10 Years

2.0% ↑



Ambulatory Health Care Services

3.3% ↑



Social Assistance

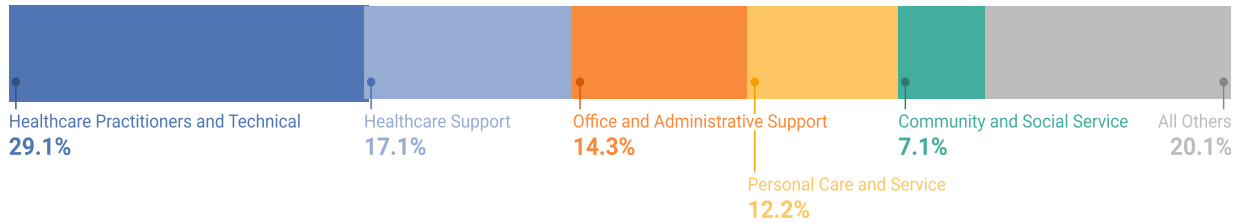
1.3% ↑



Hospitals

Source: JobsEQ®, <http://www.chmuraecon.com/jobseq>
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STAFFING PATTERNS:



6-digit Occupation	Employment	Avg Annual Wages	Annual Demand
Registered Nurses	2,414	\$69,700	156
Personal Care Aides	2,100	\$28,300	411
Nursing Assistants	1,592	\$32,600	202
Medical Assistants	735	\$40,300	100
Receptionists and Information Clerks	714	\$34,900	107
Office Clerks, General	547	\$38,200	69
Dental Assistants	542	\$43,900	68
Home Health Aides	462	\$27,800	72
Medical Secretaries	441	\$38,500	56
Physicians and Surgeons, All Other	419	\$239,000	15
Remaining Component Occupations	13,798	\$62,200	1,549
Total	23,791		

Source: JobsEQ®, <http://www.chmuraecon.com/jobseq>
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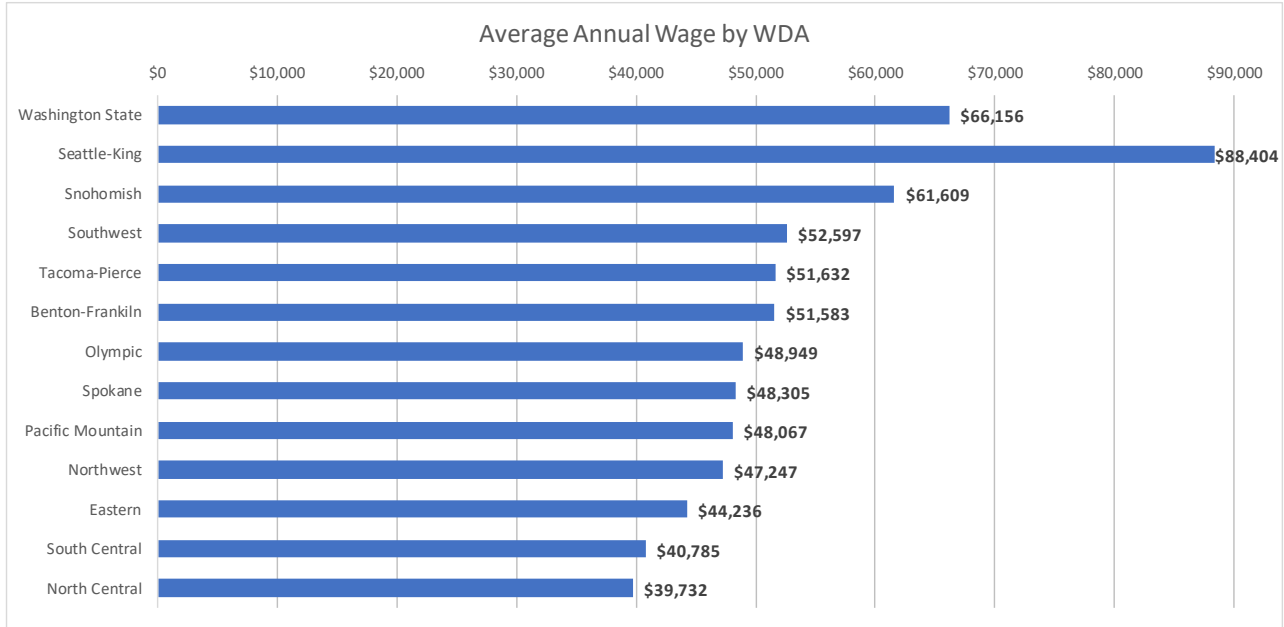
POSTSECONDARY PROGRAMS LINKED TO HEALTH CARE AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE:

Program	Awards
Bellingham Technical College	
Emergency Care Attendant (EMT Ambulance)	48
Nursing Assistant/Aide and Patient Care Assistant/Aide	61
Phlebotomy Technician/Phlebotomist	22
Registered Nursing/Registered Nurse	54
Skagit Valley College	
Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurse Training	34
Medical/Clinical Assistant	36
Nursing Assistant/Aide and Patient Care Assistant/Aide	102
Registered Nursing/Registered Nurse	69
Whatcom Community College	
Nursing Assistant/Aide and Patient Care Assistant/Aide	53
Physical Therapy Technician/Assistant	41
Registered Nursing/Registered Nurse	NA

Source: JobsEQ®egister

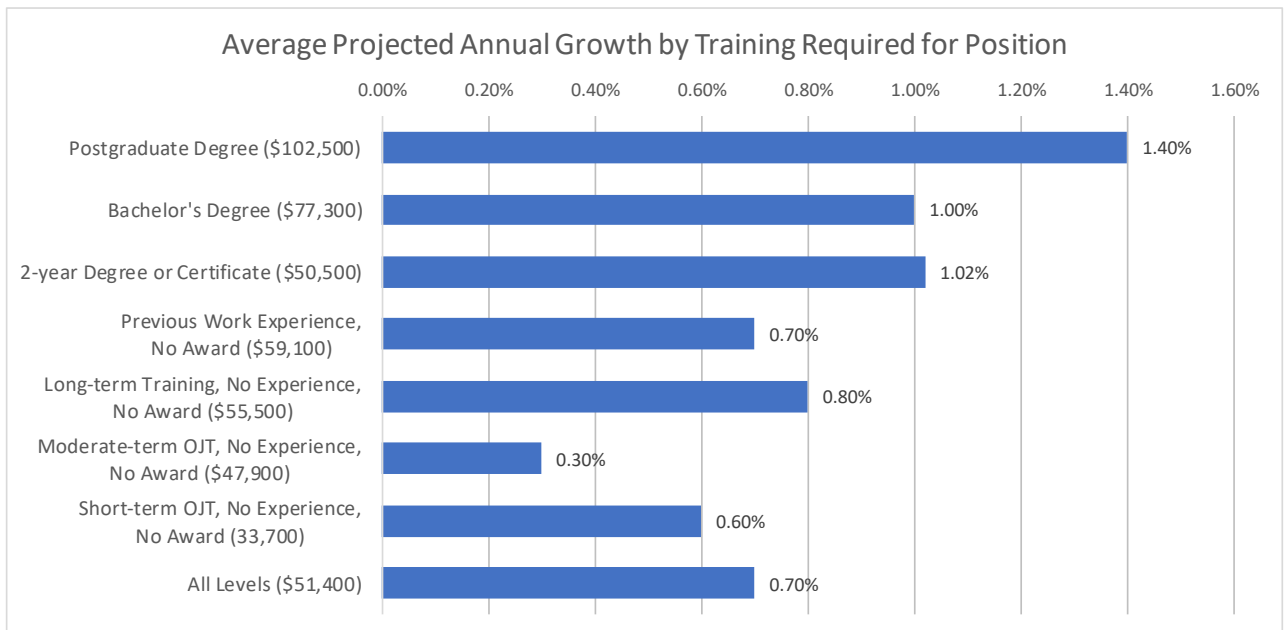
Employer Demand

The Northwest region lies in the economic shadow of the greater Seattle metropolitan area (encompassing King and Snohomish Counties) where wages and per capita income trend above the national average. NW employers struggle to find qualified workers, especially in middle management and technical occupations. Companies in our region continue to lose skilled workers to those in neighboring metropolitan areas due to greater compensation and advancement opportunities. The chart below illustrates the disparity in compensation.



Skills Needed for Jobs in the Region

The loss of skilled workers to neighboring regions produces a shortage of skilled labor in the Northwest, limiting some industries' ability to expand and remain competitive. This is illustrated by the analyses shown in the two following charts.



While projected growth for all positions will be 0.7%, positions requiring a degree will significantly exceed that level of growth. In other words, growth will be driven (or hindered) by the availability of qualified workers.

The chart below examines the same topic but uses actual instead of projected data. By comparing the level of educational attainment among those who were unemployed during 2017 (the most recent year for which data are available), we can see that those workers with a high school diploma were far more likely to experience a work interruption than those with a college degree.

Educational Attainment		
	2017 UI Claimants	Population (ages 25-64)
No High School Diploma	10%	11%
High School Diploma	42%	26%
College-no degree	18%	21%
Associate degree	14%	9%
Bachelors	12%	21%
Postgraduate Degree	3%	12%

The demonstrated mismatch between the skillset of the workforce and the needs of employers has a further, serious impact on the regional workforce as a driver of long-term unemployment. Considering that more than half of people claiming unemployment benefits in 2017 has an educational attainment of a high school diploma/GED or less and that the majority of jobs being added to the region require at least a two-year degree, it is easily explained why many workers become long term unemployed, leading to disconnection from the labor force.

Strategies for Addressing Skill Gaps

The Northwest has demonstrated a focus on the promotion of worker retraining, including incumbent worker training. This emphasis will continue along with efforts to improve skill gains among out of school youth.

Factors Contributing to Change in the Workforce Needs of Employers

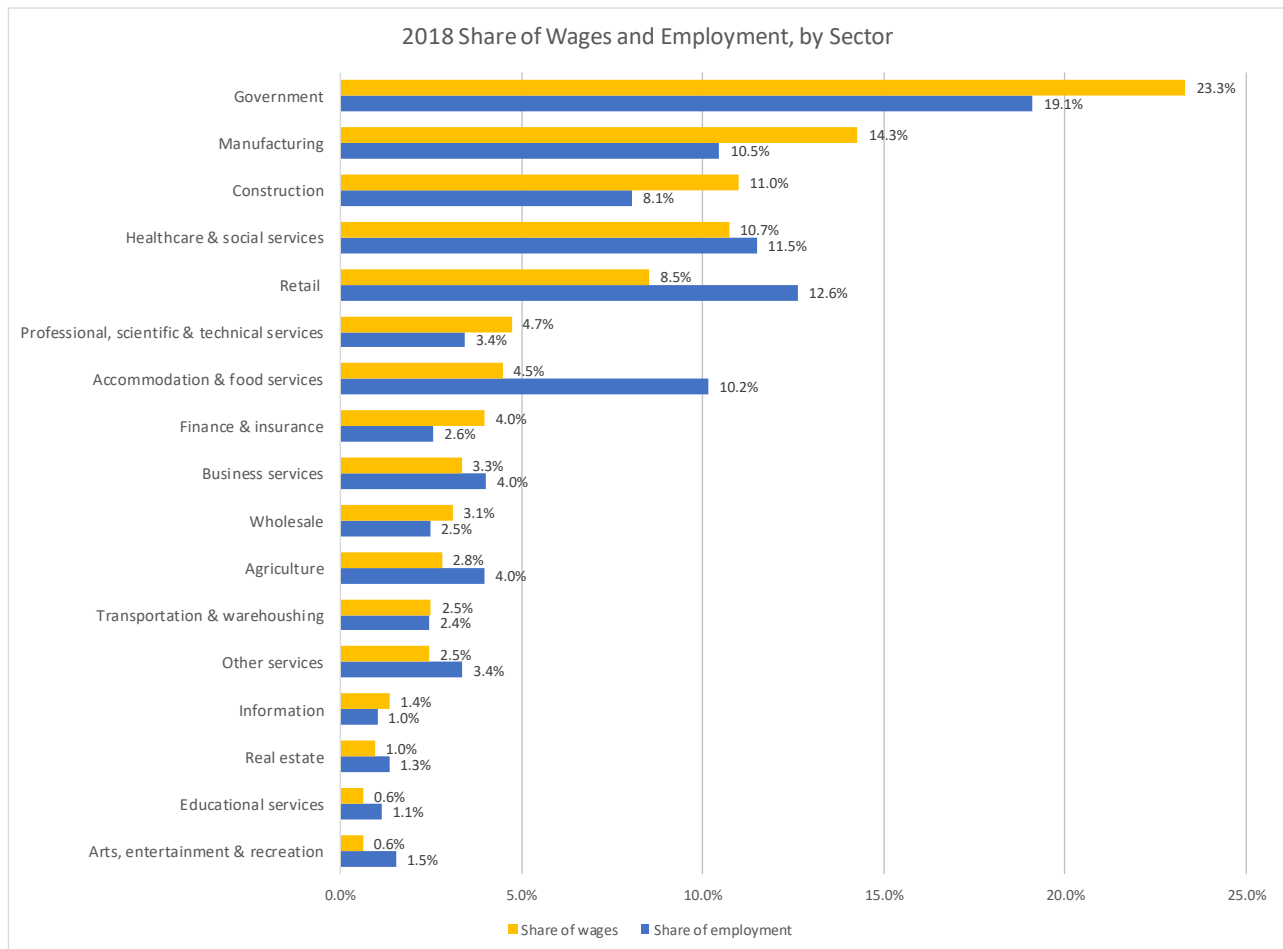
Private sector leaders in key sectors stress that their industries are undergoing dramatic changes to their workforce skill requirements, driven by increasingly volatile market dynamics and rapid technological advancements. Shifting economic, regulatory, and cultural ecosystems contribute to the rapidity and fluidity of change experienced by these industries, their leadership and the workforce. Some impacts are positive for the workforce, others are negative. One example of this: Marathon Petroleum (formerly Tesoro Corporation, then Andeavor Refinery) was unsuccessful in making a multi-million dollar investment in the production of a new, commercially viable product at its Anacortes Refinery and had to significantly scale back the project. At the same time, Silfab Solar (formerly Itek) plans to invest at least \$4 million to add more state-of-the-art manufacturing equipment to address growing demand for its American-made ultra-high-efficiency premium monocrystalline photovoltaic (PV) modules. Commerce provided a \$250,000 economic development grant to the Port of Bellingham to assist the expansion. An estimated 20-40 new jobs are expected when the newest wave of production ramps up later this year. Increasingly, local businesses focus on exports, both out of the region and out of the country, forcing innovation and

driving business growth and job creation. It is clear that the demand for highly skilled workers and supportive training programs in this sector will continue to increase.

The health and allied services sector is also experiencing dramatic shifts as the provisions of the Affordable Care Act are revised and the consequences of an aging population and workforce create new demands and skill gaps. These factors require the industry to continuously remake itself in response to changing legislation and demographics. The Northwest Alliance for Health Care Skills has recently examined the impacts of industry change on demand for LPNs, Medical Assistants and CNAs. Local training institutions continue to expand opportunities for modularized skill development and certification in support of evolving workforce skill needs.

Components of the Northwest Workforce

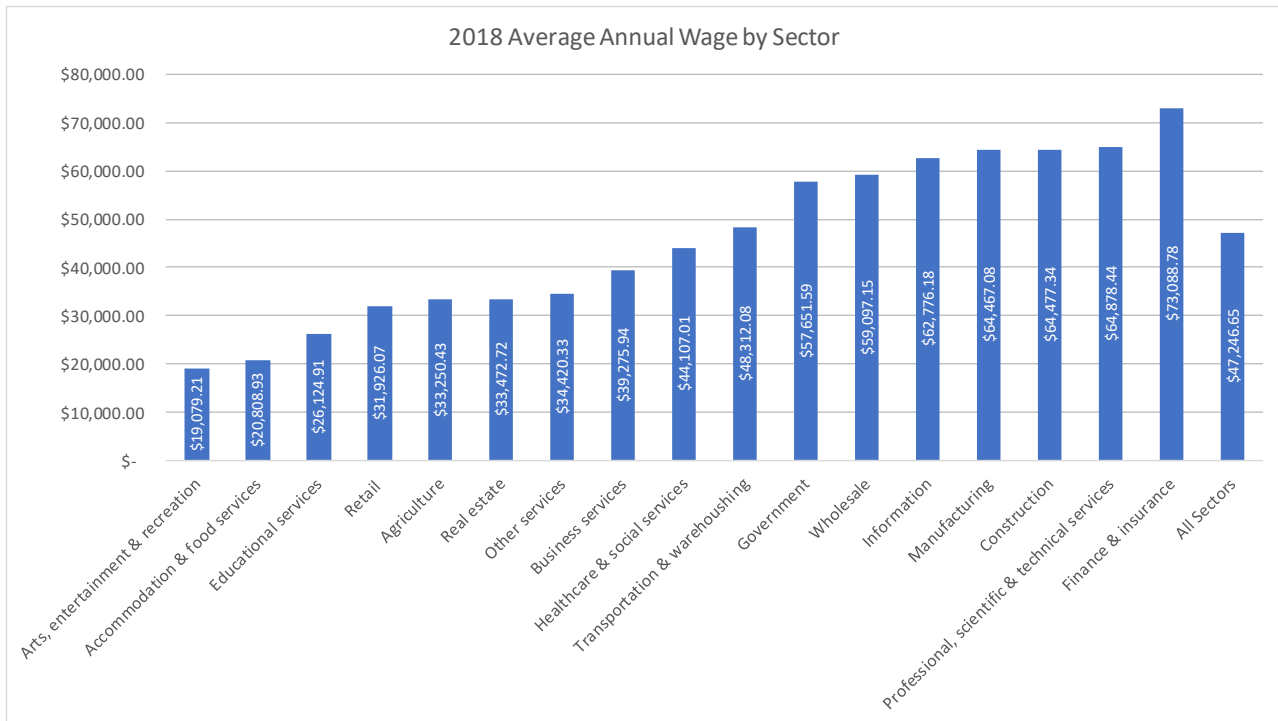
As expected in a region rich in public education and tribal enterprises, such as hotels and gaming establishments, the government sector has the highest wage share. Setting aside the government sector, however, the manufacturing sector emerges as the largest single private enterprise contributor to the regional wage pool. Further, manufacturing and construction, taken together, comprise 25.3% of regional wages, exceeding the governmental contribution.



Source: Washington State Employment Security Department

As noted, the manufacturing sector is seen to have the highest non-governmental share of wages, while retail has the highest share of employment. Frequently, the economic development value of the retail sector is discounted, as it tends to cycle existing money rather than providing new

sources of income to the region. In the Northwest, however, retail can be partially viewed as an export, particularly in Whatcom County, where proximity to British Columbia, attracts “new” money from Canada, although it is highly dependent on the exchange rate. In terms of workforce development, retail is challenging because of the high number of entry level jobs relative to the whole, the value of pay associated with those entry level jobs, high turnover, and a lack of perceived career ladders. These entry level jobs are, however, valuable in terms of the opportunity to gain work experience and develop soft skills.



As shown in the chart above, the manufacturing and construction sectors, in addition to contributing the largest private enterprise shares of the regional wage pool, also pay an average wage that is among the highest in the region. In addition to providing a dominant share of the workforce and high wages, both manufacturing and construction have delivered strong growth in employment since 2010, 26.9% and 43.4%, respectively. As shown in the table below, the construction sector, hardest hit by the recession, employed 13,355 workers in 2018, finally exceeding the 2008 prerecession employment number of 12,469 workers. Contributing to future growth in this sector is the initiation of two large, multi-year building initiatives kicked off by Western Washington University in 2019. Industrial and commercial construction has stayed strong, and residential construction employment is increasing, fueled by low vacancy rates and the increase in the region’s population.

Employment Growth, 2010-2018		
	2018 Employment	% Growth
All Sectors	165,899	13.4%
Construction	13,355	43.4%
Educational Services	1,896	42.2%
Business Services	6,674	35.6%
Manufacturing	17,361	26.9%
Transportation & Warehousing	4,063	23.4%
Real Estate	2,231	23.3%
Accommodation & Food Services	16,842	18.6%
Healthcare & Social Services	19,058	16.8%
Agriculture	6,598	16.5%
Finance & Insurance	4,271	13.9%
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	5,707	13.8%
Retail	20,935	9.5%
Government	31,692	2.9%
Wholesale	4,109	-1.6%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	2,552	-3.2%
Other Services	5,590	-16.5%
Information	1,694	-17.6%

Commuting Patterns

Just under one-third (32.6%) of the people in the region commute out of the area for work and about nineteen percent (18.6%) of the jobs in the region are held by people who commute in. Since 2010, there had been a steady increase in the percent (and number) of people living in the Northwest but commuting to work outside the area.

Inflow/Outflow Report				
	2017		2010	
	#	%	#	%
OutFlow Summary				
Employed in the Selection Area	150,610	100.0%	133,486	100.0%
Living in the Selection Area	181,797	100.0%	160,178	100.0%
Net Job Inflow (+) or Outflow (-)	-31,187		-26,692	
In-Area Labor Force Efficiency (All Jobs)				
Living in the Selection Area	181,797	100.0%	160,178	100.0%
Living and Employed in the Selection Area	122,552	67.4%	111,165	69.4%
Living in the Selection Area but Employed Outside	59,245	32.6%	49,013	30.6%
In-Area Employment Efficiency (All Jobs)				
Employed in the Selection Area	150,610	100.0%	133,486	100.0%
Employed and Living in the Selection Area	122,552	81.4%	111,165	83.3%
Employed in the Selection Area but Living Outside	28,058	18.6%	22,321	16.7%

One driver for this increase in outflow is likely to be the faster recovery of employment and higher wages in Snohomish and King Counties. This is demonstrated by the increase in the number of outflow commuting by workers earning more than \$3,333 per month.

Outflow Job Characteristics (All Jobs)				
	2017		2010	
	#	%	#	%
External Jobs Filled by Residents	59,245	100.0%	49,013	100.0%
Workers Aged 29 or younger	14,921	25.2%	12,177	24.8%
Workers Aged 30 to 54	29,429	49.7%	26,072	53.2%
Workers Aged 55 or older	14,895	25.1%	10,764	22.0%
Workers Earning \$1,250 per month or less	12,404	20.9%	12,681	25.9%
Workers Earning \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	18,903	31.9%	16,692	34.1%
Workers Earning More than \$3,333 per month	27,938	47.2%	19,640	40.1%
Workers in the "Goods Producing" Industry	11,205	18.9%	8,063	16.5%
Workers in the "Trade, Transportation, and Utilities" Industry	15,893	26.8%	13,882	28.3%
Workers in the "All Other Services" Industry	32,147	54.3%	27,068	55.2%

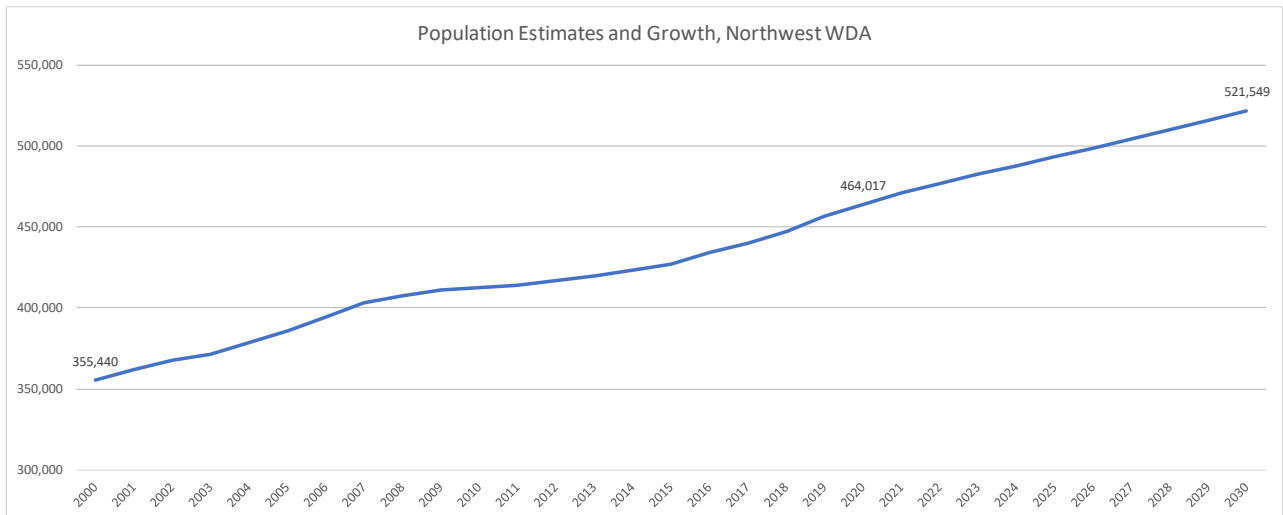
On the other hand, in 2017, more workers earning more than \$3,333 per month commuted from outside the area than in 2010, indicating that employers cannot always find the experience and skills they need within the area.

Inflow Job Characteristics (All Jobs)				
	2017		2010	
	#	%	#	%
Internal Jobs Filled by Outside Workers	28,058	100.0%	22,321	100.0%
Workers Aged 29 or younger	7,879	28.1%	6,878	30.8%
Workers Aged 30 to 54	14,050	50.1%	11,372	50.9%
Workers Aged 55 or older	6,129	21.8%	4,071	18.2%
Workers Earning \$1,250 per month or less	6,887	24.5%	6,751	30.2%
Workers Earning \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	9,166	32.7%	8,097	36.3%
Workers Earning More than \$3,333 per month	12,005	42.8%	7,473	33.5%
Workers in the "Goods Producing" Industry	6,165	22.0%	4,124	18.5%
Workers in the "Trade, Transportation, and Utilities" Industry	7,183	25.6%	6,658	29.8%
Workers in the "All Other Services" Industry	14,710	52.4%	11,539	51.7%

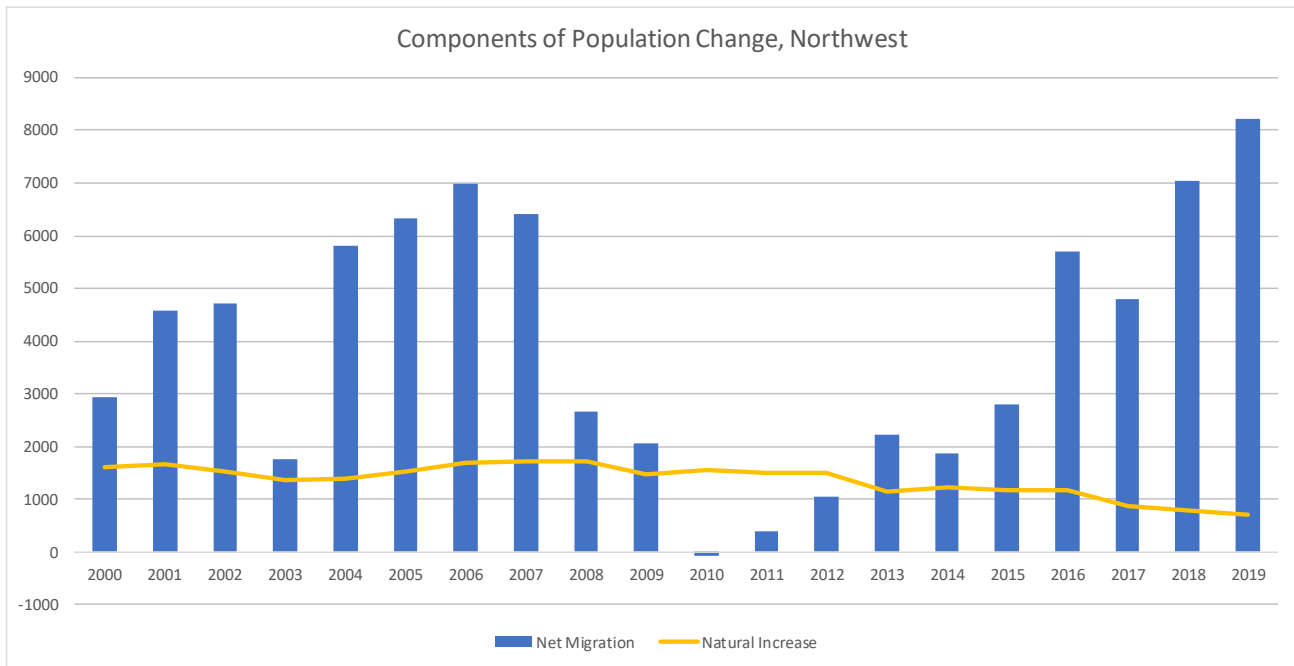
Workforce Profile

The Northwest, in common with most of Washington State, has and will continue to experience significant changes in the demographics of the population, notably, increasing the diversity and advancing age of its citizens and workforce. A close watch is kept on updates to demographic information, so that changes can be noted, and action taken, as indicated.

The Northwest has experienced a steady increase in population since 2000, with a noticeable slow down during the recession period (2010-2015).



The increase in the population's growth rate is primarily a function of the resumption of net migration which has steadily increased since 2009-2010 when there was a net out migration in reaction to the recession. This continued increase is showing an impact on both who is available for the workforce (an increase in the labor pool), what occupations are needed to support the populations, and an upturn of the residential housing market. The natural population increase (births-deaths) demonstrates a slow steady declining trend but is not a significant factor in population change.



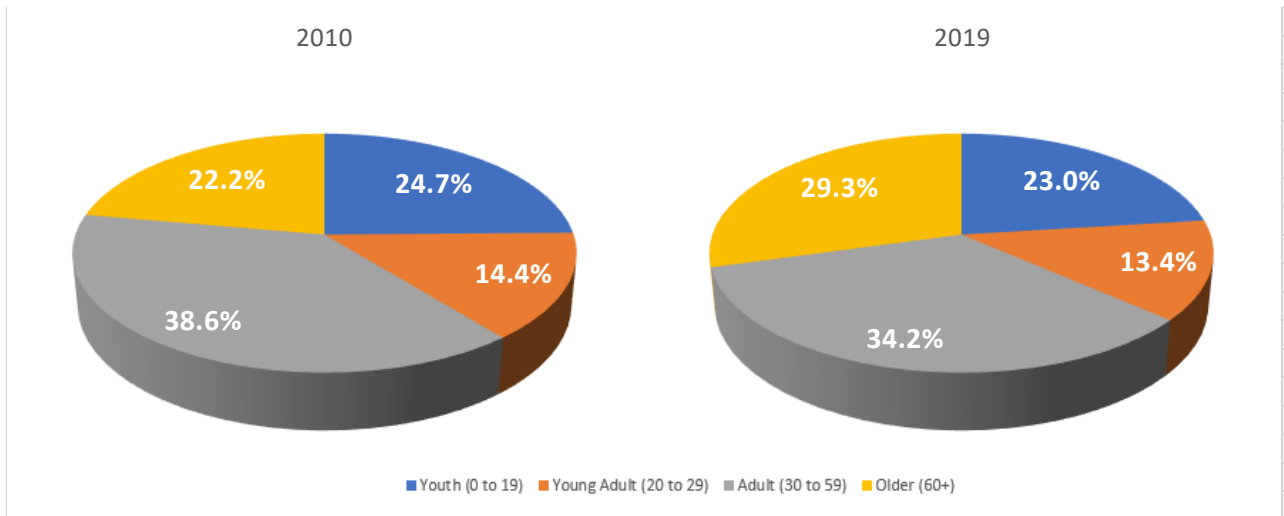
An Aging Population

Approximately 30% of the population in the Northwest is above the age of 60, an increase of 7 percentage points since 2010. This compares to only 18% over the age of 60 for all of Washington State. This disparity is significant, and continued growth in the 60+ age group is expected for the following reasons: the aging of a relatively large current 50-60 year old cohort (Baby Boomers); projected increased longevity; and increased in-migration of older age groups as a result of personal lifestyle changes and the presence of attractive retirement communities. These factors will affect both the types of services provided and the corresponding workforce talent needed.

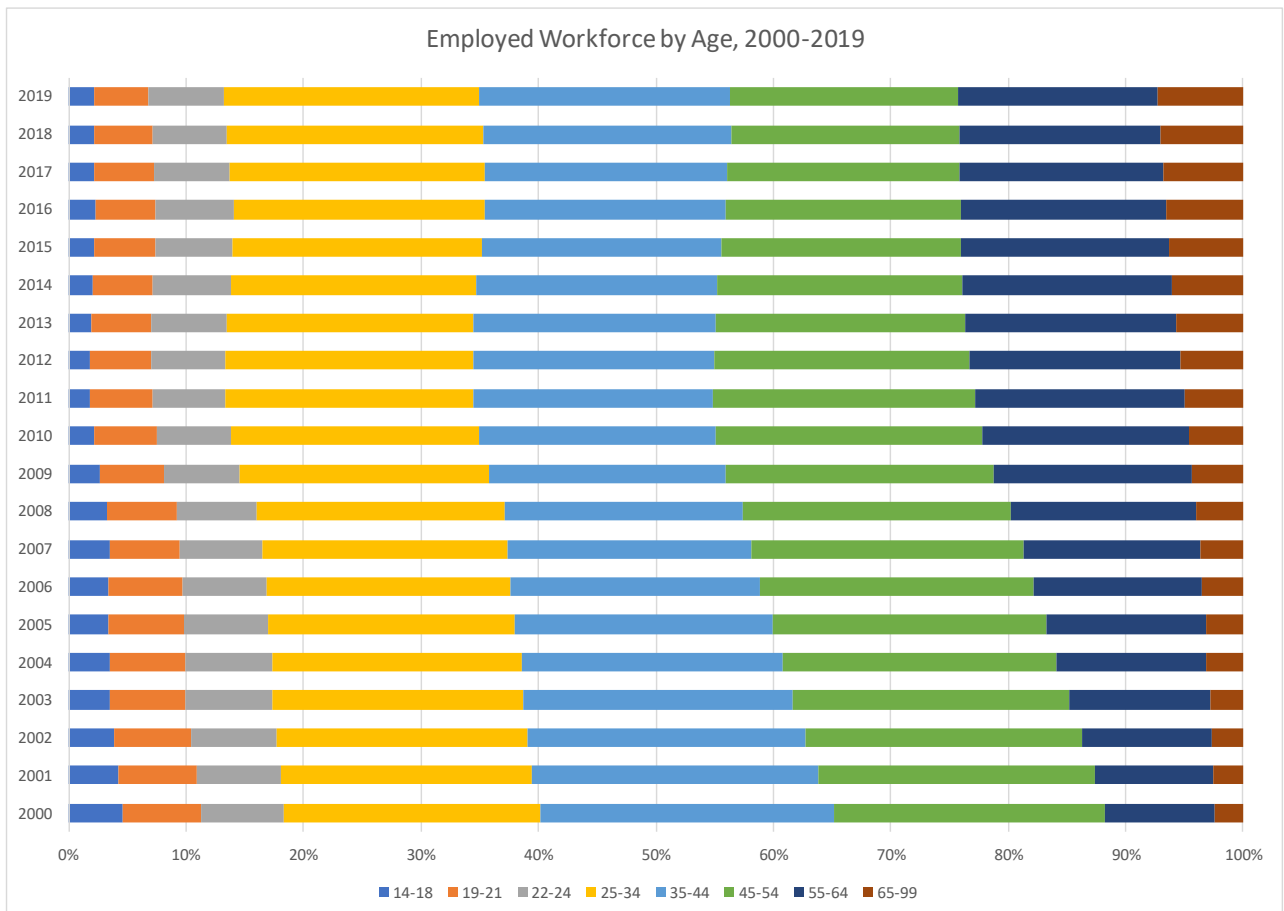
Population by Age						
	Northwest, 2010		Northwest, 2019		WA State, 2019	
Preschool (0 to 4)	24,015	5.8%	24,800	5.4%	439,657	6.5%
School Age (5 to 19)	78,031	18.9%	80,352	17.6%	1,330,238	19.8%
Young Adult (20 to 29)	59,476	14.4%	61,211	13.4%	941,910	14.0%
Mid Adult (30 to 49)	99,429	24.1%	98,079	21.5%	1,854,597	27.6%
Older Adult (50 to 59)	59,741	14.5%	58,126	12.7%	948,374	14.1%
Older Adult (60 to 69)	49,120	11.9%	67,345	14.8%	652,561	9.7%
Older (70+)	42,504	10.3%	66,558	14.6%	557,203	8.3%
Total	412,316		456,470		6,724,540	

The charts below show how the pattern of age distribution has changed since 2010, with the noted increase in the 60+ age group (Older). The Northwest has also experienced a significant loss of population in the 30-59 age group (Adult). This is an actual decrease, not just a proportional one, with fewer people of these ages living in the region than were resident in 2010. This is a negative outcome for the workforce, since these are considered the most productive segments of the population.

Northwest Age Distribution



The chart below shows the age distribution within the employed workforce of the Northwest between 2000 and 2019. The graphics highlight the shift toward more representation by older workers



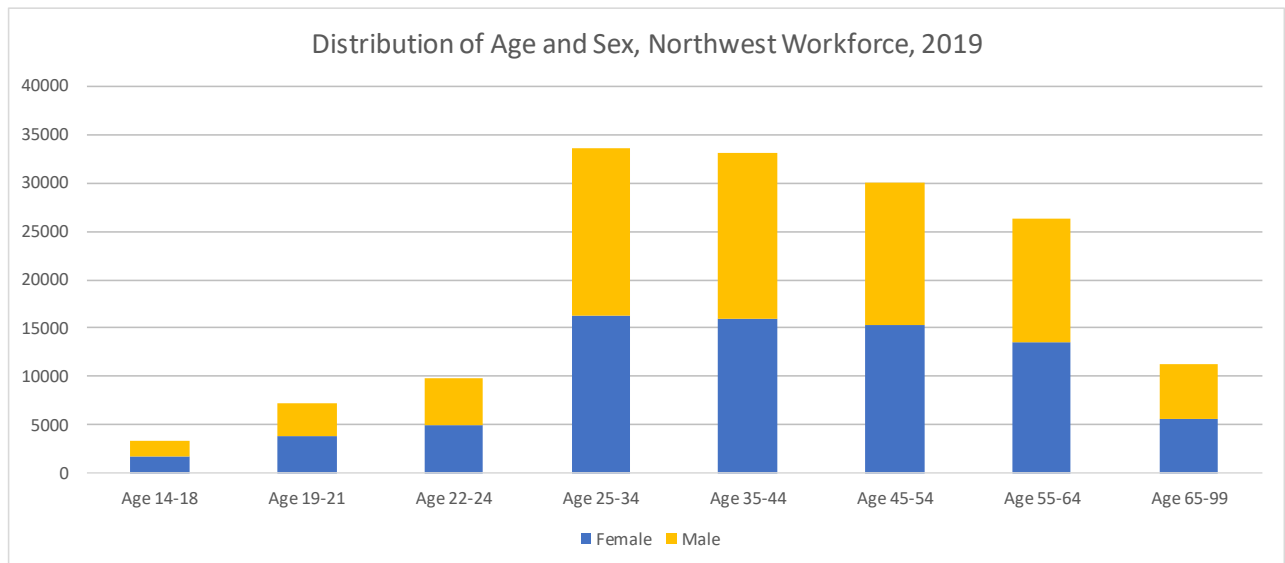
Strategies to Address the Shifting Age of the Workforce

With the increasing age of the workforce and citizens, many age-related issues will require focus: retirement patterns and how they affect the labor pool; the impact of restructuring and dislocation on the older worker; the need for retraining incumbent older workers for new, emerging occupations or increased technical job responsibilities and competencies; and the compatibility of demand occupations and jobs with the interests and skills of the mature worker.

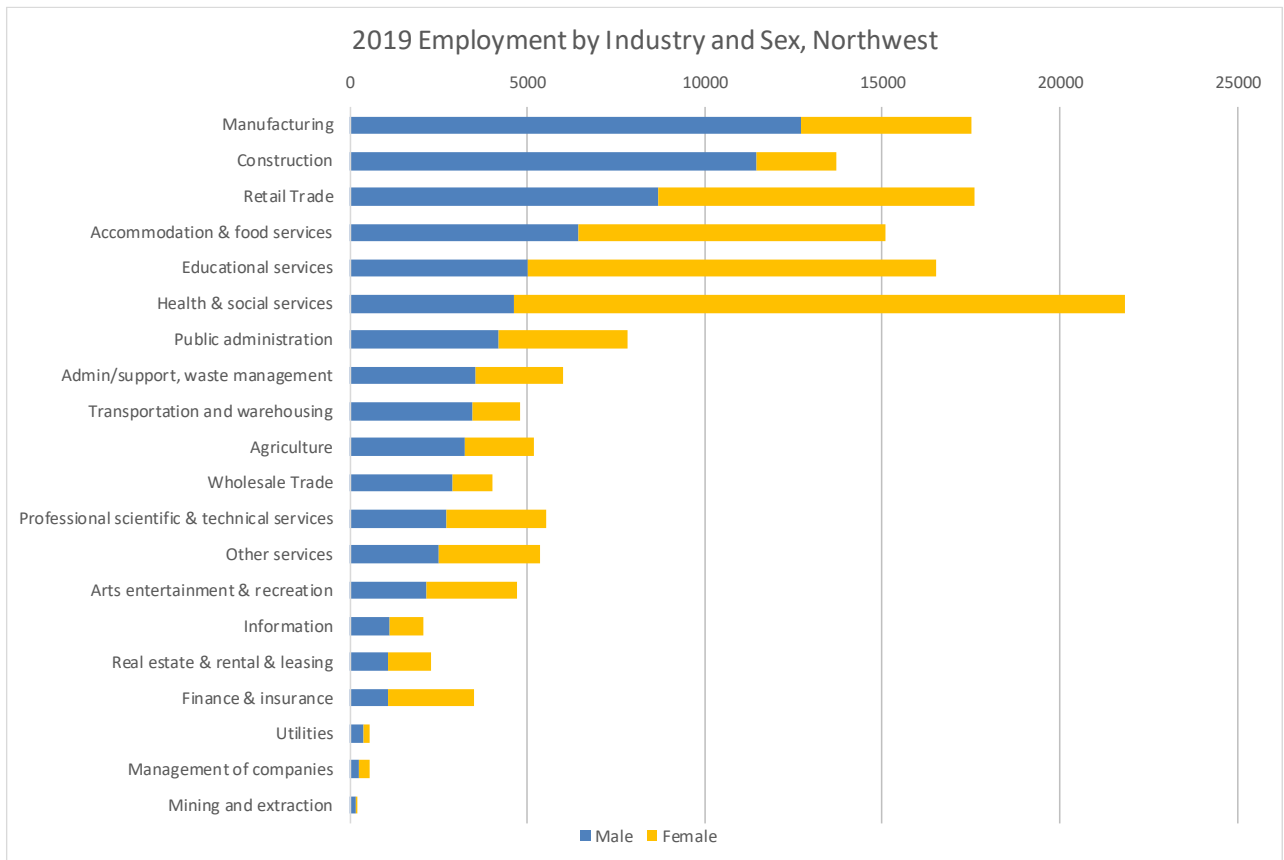
The “boomer” generation has begun to retire in force, causing employers to become concerned about replacing these experienced workers since, as previously discussed, the age 30-59 group may be inadequate both in size and current skills to replace those who are retiring from the workforce. The primary challenge for the Northwest will be retaining and developing this critically important labor resource. Strategies must be put in place to dissuade young workers from leaving to pursue jobs in the larger metropolitan areas, due to the higher wages, jobs more readily matching their skills and interests, and attractiveness of a more urban social environment.

Sex in the Workforce

As shown in the graph below, men and women compromise almost equal segments of the Northwest workforce across all age groups.



Participation by industry varies widely (see chart below), however, with significantly higher proportions of women working in certain industries, notably accommodation and food services, health and social services, and education. The lower average wage in these industries begins to explain the continuing disparity in men’s and women’s earnings.



The labor force participation rates for men and women in the Northwest are aligned with the state overall. Unemployment, however, varies, with the unemployment rate for men in the Northwest exceeding that of the state overall. Women of the Northwest, meanwhile, are at or below the unemployment level achieved by the state overall.

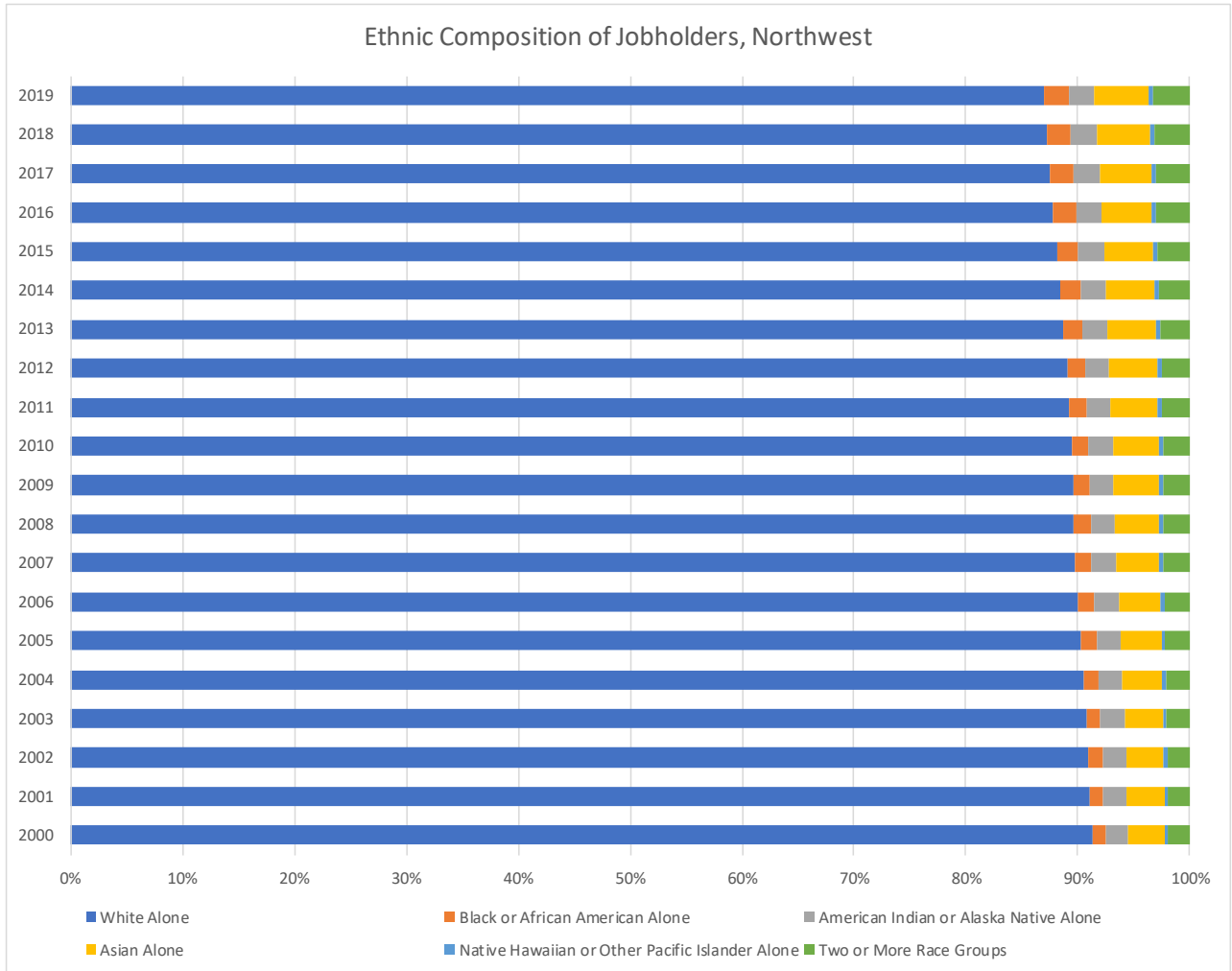


One strategy for addressing the shortfall of workers in the 30-59 age group may be to focus on increasing workforce participation among women of child-bearing age. The availability of

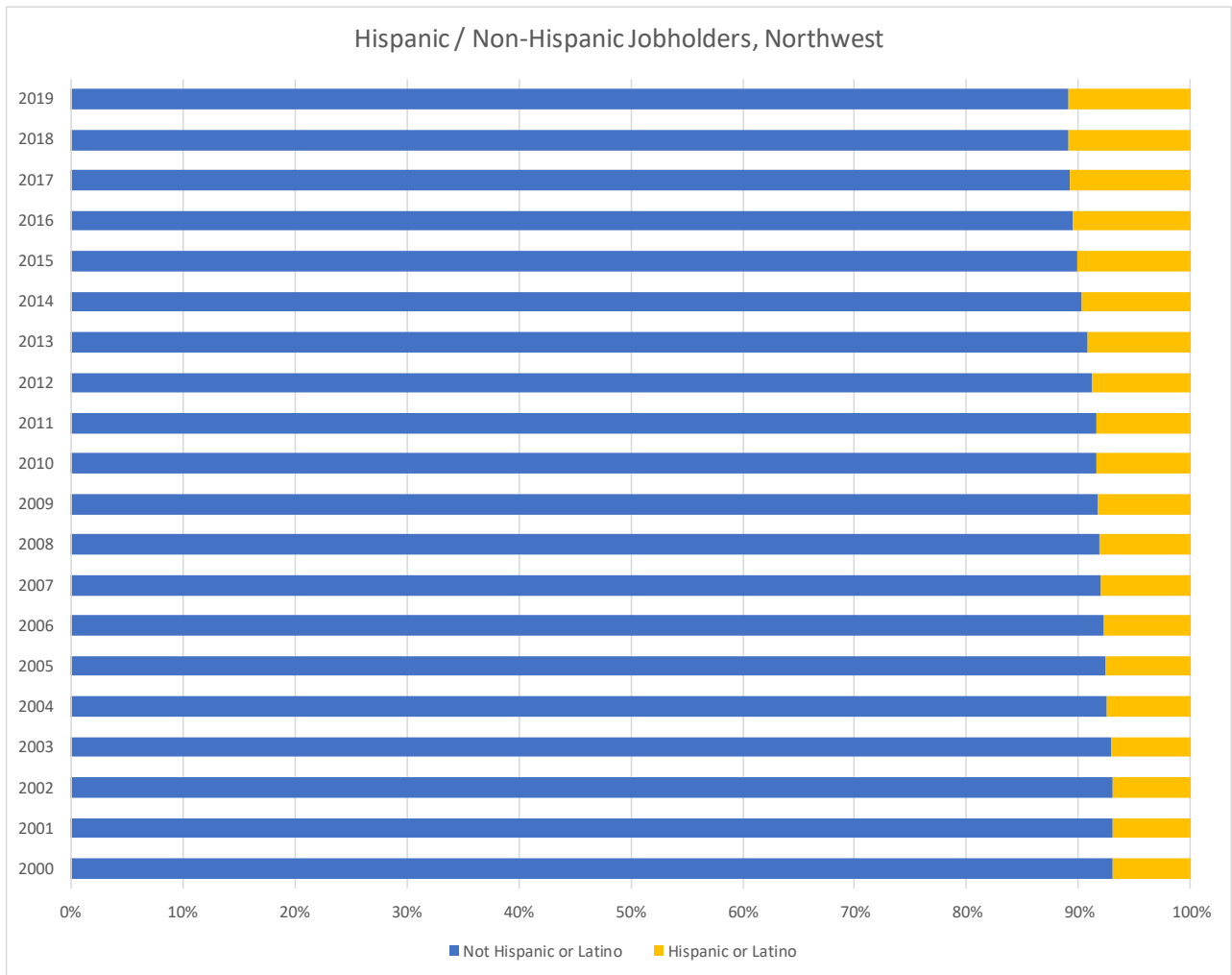
affordable, high-quality childcare may be a significant factor in achieving this.

The Northwest Workforce Is Increasingly Ethnically Diverse

Minority populations represent a growing proportion of the overall workforce, although whites remain the majority. It is expected the increase in non-white groups will be sustained through 2030.



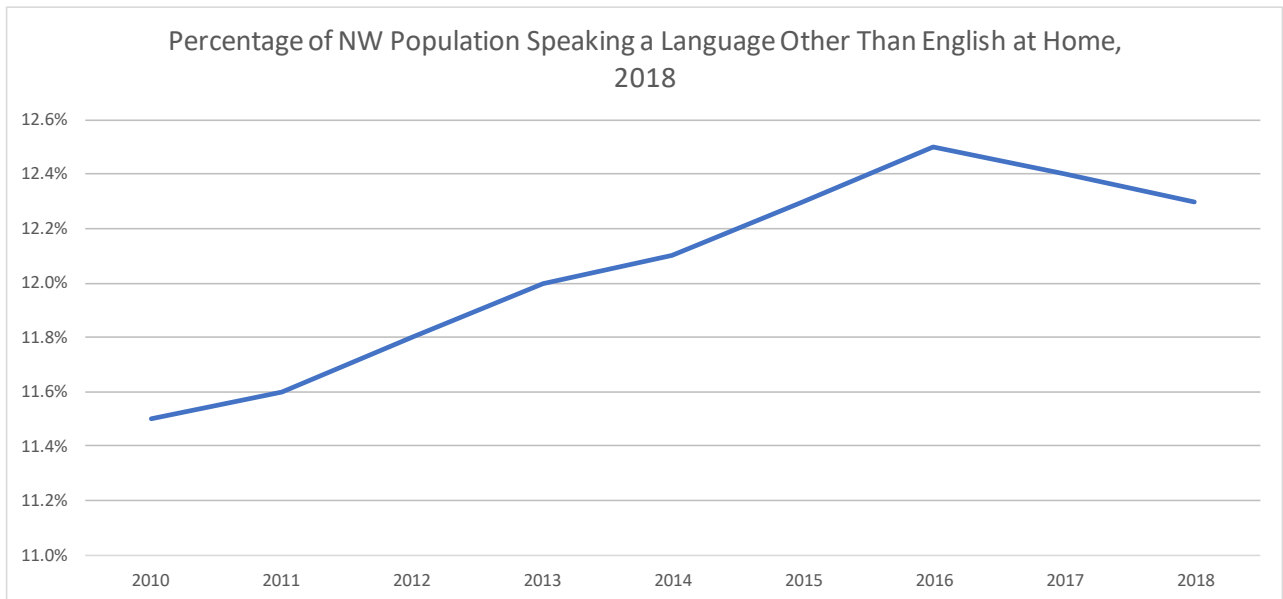
The Hispanic component of the workforce is growing also, from 6.9% in 2000 to 10.9% in 2019. Those identifying as Hispanic report membership in a range of ethnicities, complicating how this demographic is tracked.



The Northwest workforce is expected to follow the statewide demographic trend in terms of labor force composition by race and ethnicity. The percent of Washington’s labor force from non-white backgrounds is expected to more than double between 1990 and 2030, increasing from 8.4% in 1990 to 18.5% in 2030. The proportion of the labor force that is Hispanic is projected to quadruple, from 3.5% in 1990 to 13.5% as of 2030.

Language Barriers

Because of the continuing shift toward increased workforce participation by non-white individuals, employers must consider language ability and divergent cultural issues within the workforce. The chart below shows overall growth in the percentage of people speaking a language other than English at home, although the trend has reversed in the last two years. This levelling-off may signal that growth in non-white populations is being driven more by natural increase than by immigration.



The growth in the size of the population of English Language Learners (ELL) will increase the need to deliver services in languages other than English, with significant variation in demand by county (shown in the table below). Local WorkSource centers must continue to monitor demand in the immediate service area and respond appropriately.

Percentage of Population Speaking a Language other than English at Home									
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total Northwest WDA	11.5%	11.6%	11.8%	12.0%	12.1%	12.3%	12.5%	12.4%	12.3%
Whatcom	15.2%	15.0%	14.4%	14.2%	14.7%	15.3%	16.1%	16.7%	17.3%
Skagit	11.4%	11.5%	12.1%	12.5%	12.3%	12.4%	12.4%	11.9%	11.5%
Island	7.7%	7.9%	7.9%	8.7%	8.5%	8.6%	8.5%	8.1%	8.1%
San Juan	5.6%	5.8%	7.1%	7.2%	7.1%	7.5%	7.6%	7.1%	6.8%

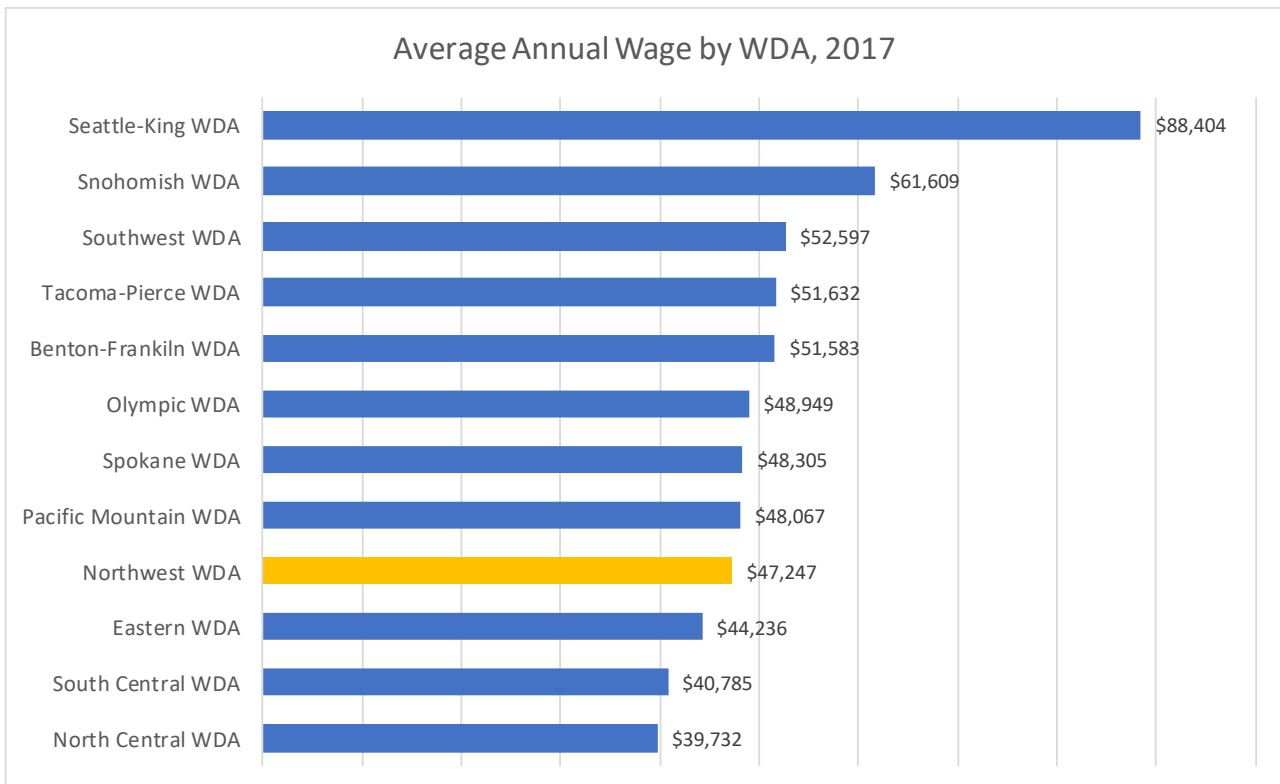
In 2018, approximately 12% of the population (ages 5+) living in the Northwest region spoke a language other than English at home. Spanish was the most frequently spoken language, followed by “Other Indo-European” languages and then “Asian and Pacific Islander” languages. Island County differs from this trend, with “Asian and Pacific Islander” languages as the second most frequently spoken languages at home.

Language Spoken at Home (2018)					
	Skagit	Whatcom	Island	San Juan	Total NW
Spanish	13.4%	5.7%	3.2%	4.4%	7.3%
Other Indo-European	1.8%	3.3%	1.5%	1.7%	2.5%
Asian and Pacific Islander	1.4%	2.2%	3.3%	0.7%	2.1%
Other	0.7%	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.3%
Language other than English	17.3%	11.5%	8.1%	6.8%	12.3%

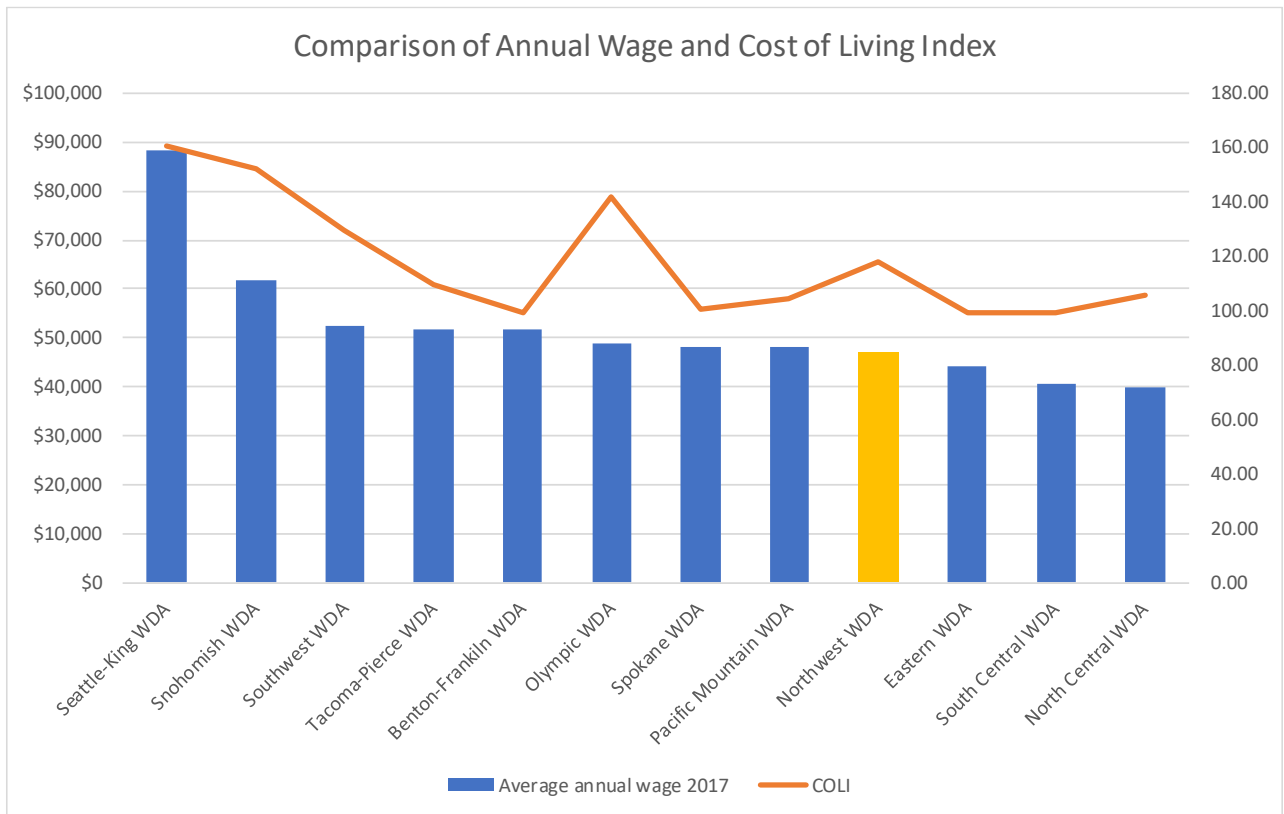
Lastly, growth among English Language Learners has also fueled an increased demand across almost all occupations for workers who are bilingual and it is the second highest hard skill required in online job ads.

Comparison of Wages, by Region

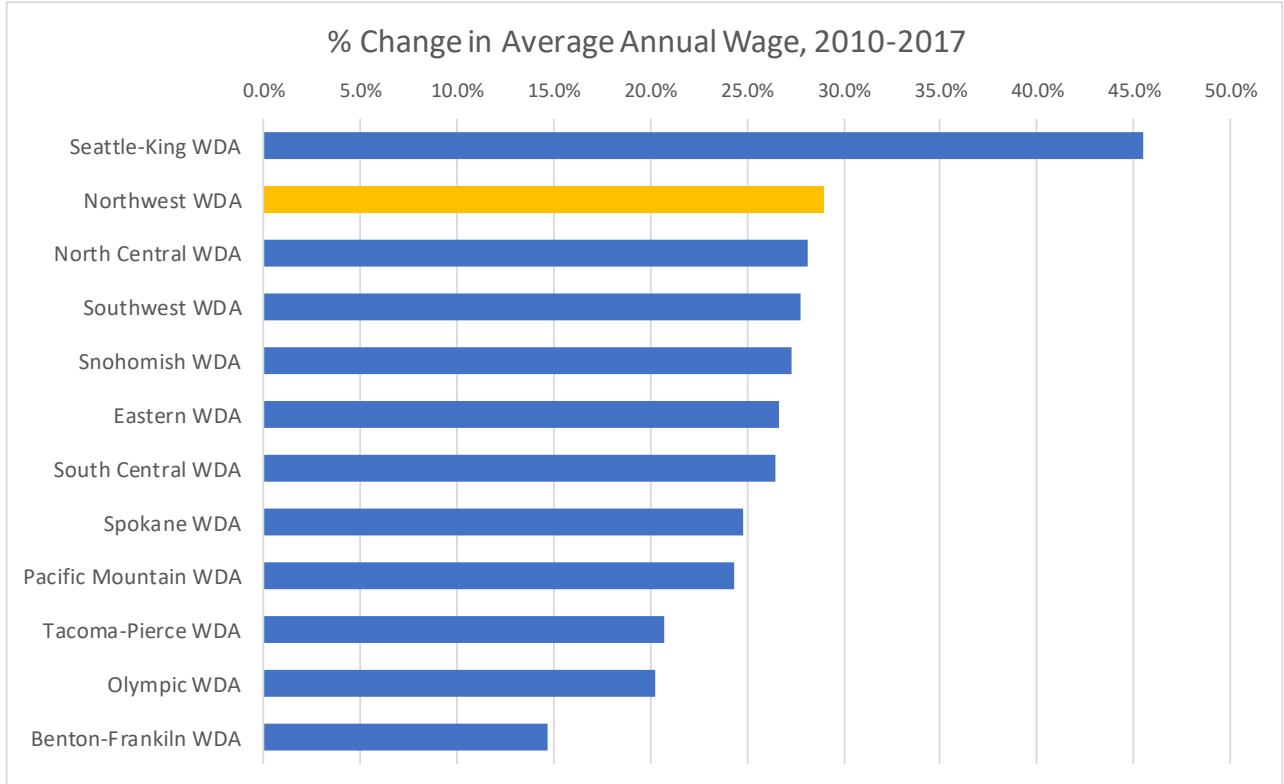
As noted earlier, the significantly higher wage rates in the two counties to the south (Snohomish and King) have an impact on the loss of workers who leave because of compensation. The table below summarizes the average annual wage of all 12 WDAs. Snohomish’s average annual wage is 30% higher than that of the Northwest, with an additional \$14,362 annually. The disparity between Seattle-King and the Northwest is even greater: the annual wage is 87% higher, with an additional \$41,157 annually.



The disparity in wages has been recognized in the past and somewhat explained by the difference in the cost of living between the regions. The chart below compares the average annual wage (Primary Y-axis) against the Cost of Living Index (COLI) for each WDA (secondary Y-axis). As expected, the regions with the highest wage also experience the highest cost of living. The COLI for the Northwest, however, is not low enough to offset all of the difference in wages, resulting in lower real income.



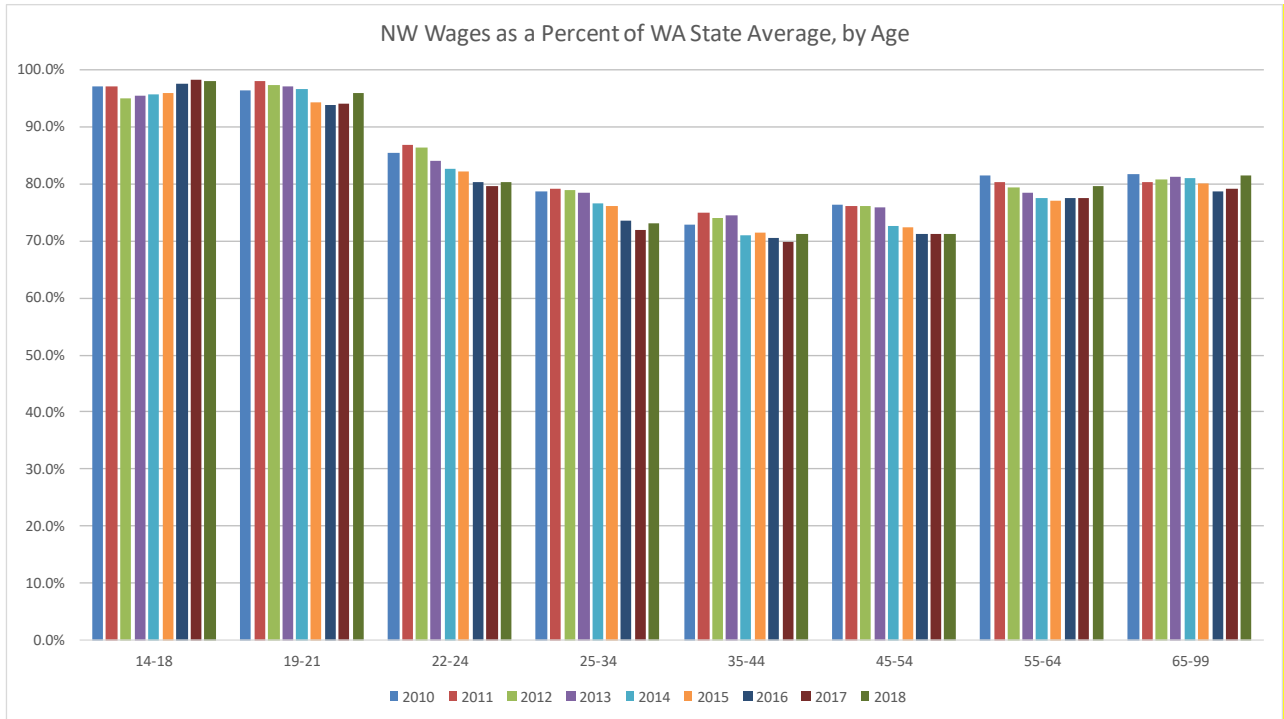
On a positive note, wages in the Northwest experienced the second highest growth rate among the WDAs.



Wages by Age

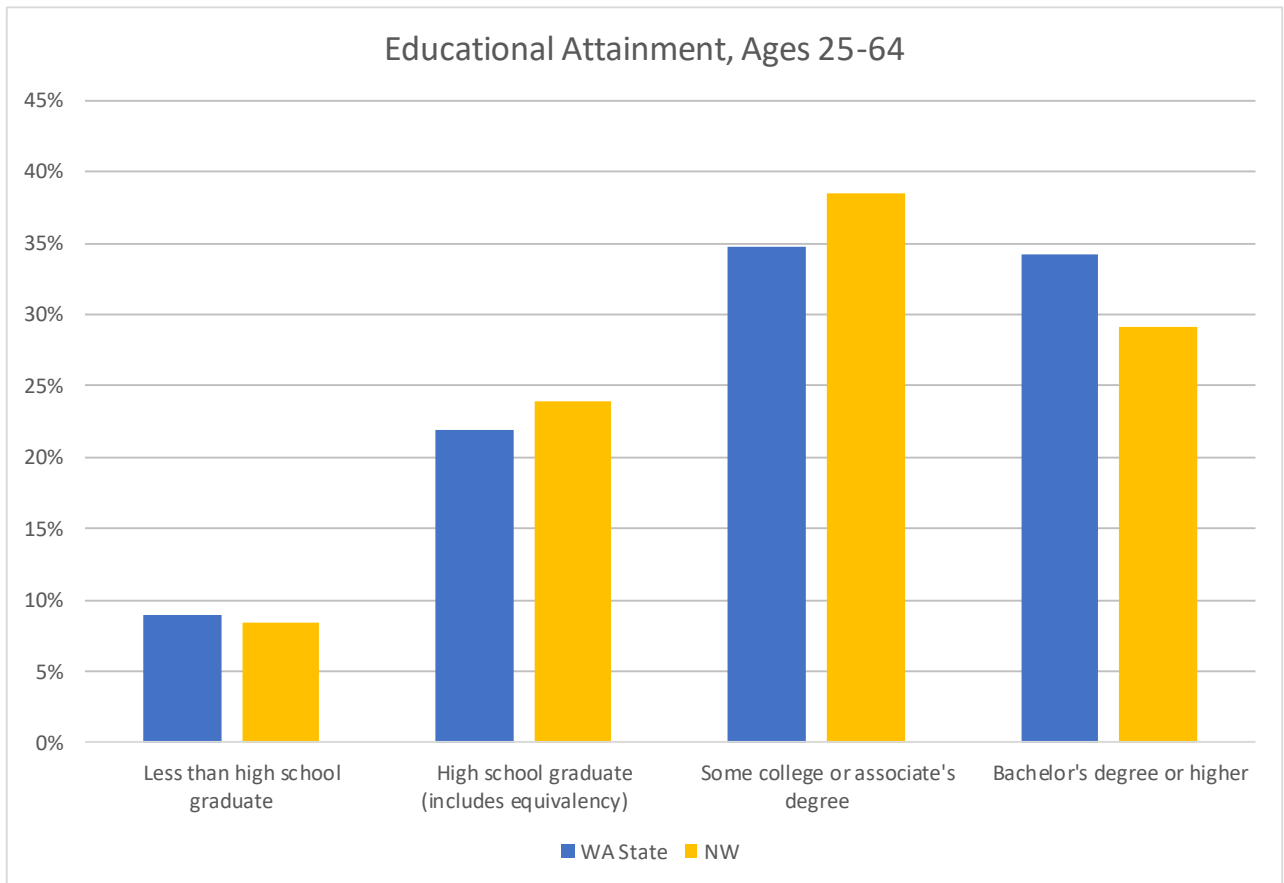
While all age groups in the Northwest earn less than the state average, younger workers (age 14-21) experience a smaller disparity. This outcome may be due to the fact many young workers are employed in jobs paying minimum or similar wage. The wage gap has increased in size since 2010, with every age group except 14-18 year old’s earning a smaller percentage of the state average in 2018.

The wage gap is largest for the prime earning years, ages 35-44, whose wages consistently average only 72% of the state average wage. This is almost certainly a factor driving people in their 30’s to leave the region.

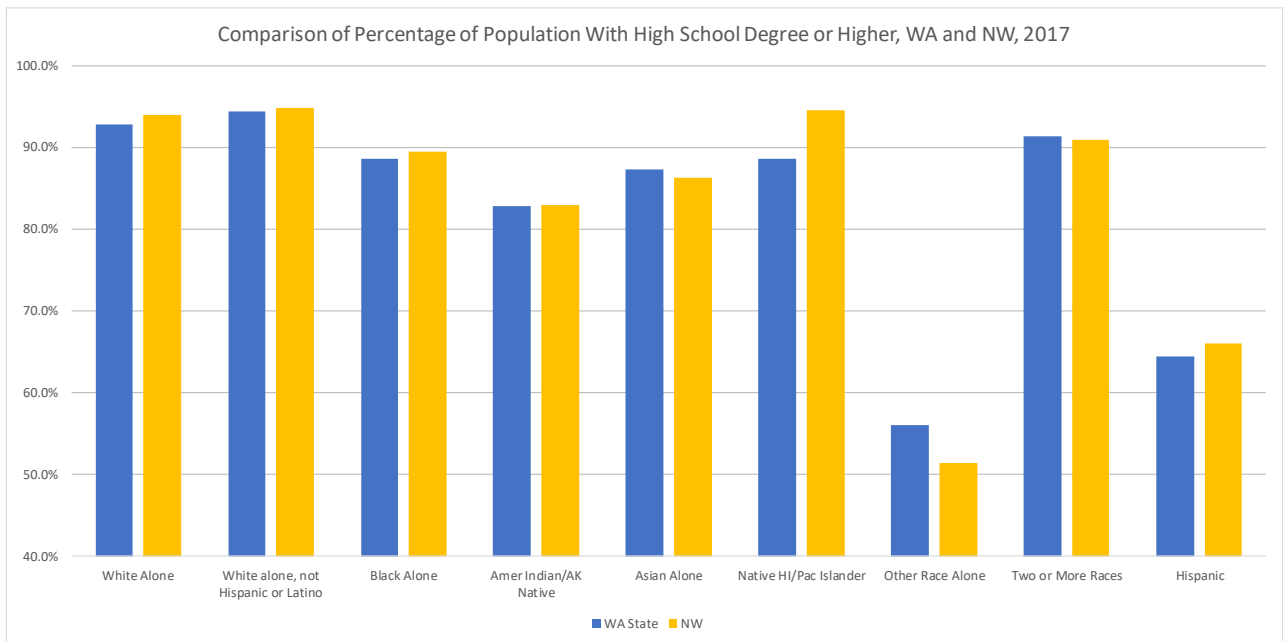


Education Levels of the Workforce

The table below shows that the population of the Northwest has a lower level of education than the state overall. This is another impact of the wage disparity; those individuals who can compete successfully for the higher paying jobs available in the Seattle metro area (those with a Bachelor’s degree or higher) tend to leave the Northwest.



Educational attainment varies by race in both Washington State and the Northwest. Those reporting Hispanic ethnicity have the lowest rate of achieving a high school degree or higher. It is encouraging, however, that most races in the Northwest exceed the state-wide level of educational attainment.



Basic Information Technology (IT) and Computer Fundamentals

Basic IT competency has become a minimum requirement for the preponderance of jobs. IT skills

are a bridge to enter employment, academic classes, formal computer classes, or vocational training. For those already employed, basic IT competency is a key to keeping and advancing their employment.

The region’s key industries each require an entry level workforce with information technology competencies. For example, hospitals are the largest private employers and require IT skills of their housekeeping and environmental services staff. Hiring needs and occupational vacancy survey data analyzed by the state’s Workforce Board indicates employers’ continuing demand for workers with technological skill sets and their ongoing difficulties in finding qualified workers.

Much of the current IT training misses those individuals seeking employment that lack basic IT skills. The region is becoming more ethnically diverse and service delivery models and training methods are changing to address minority populations. The region’s workforce is aging and experiencing an out-migration of 20-40 year olds, a technically adept age cohort. As older workers exit full time employment or physically demanding occupations, their new employment opportunities will require basic computing skills. These trends point to the need to provide basic IT skills to:

- Low skilled and low income individuals (including young adult and welfare recipients)
- Speakers of non-native language
- Mature workers
- Current workers whose IT skills no longer meet minimum requirements

Young Adults in the Workforce

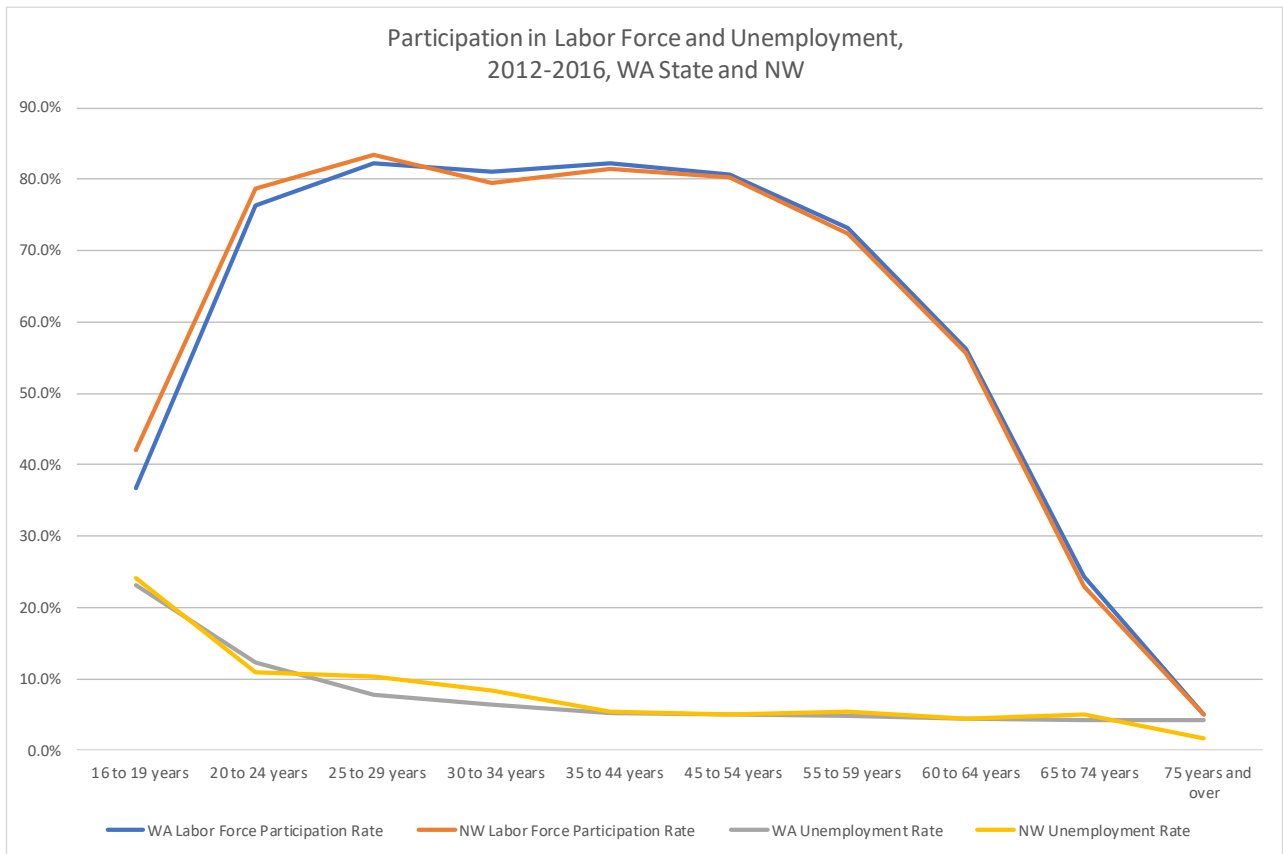
Young adults (16-24) comprise 17% of the total population in the Northwest, representing a large potential part of the workforce. When compared to WA State, young adults in the Northwest have a higher rate of participation in the labor force, perhaps an effect of the out-migration of adults in the prime earning years.

Labor Force Participation, WA State - NW				
	WA State		NW	
16-24	503721	8.9%	38477	11.0%
25-59	2711274	48.0%	145442	41.6%
60+	409079	7.2%	29152	8.3%

In addition to showing stronger labor force participation rates, young adults in the Northwest experience a lower unemployment rate than that of the state overall for that age group.

Comparison of Young Adult Workforce, WA State - NW				
	WA State		NW	
Population, 16-24	843,473	14.9%	59,239	16.9%
Labor Force	503,721	59.7%	38,477	65.0%
Unemployment Rate	76,459	15.2%	5,413	14.1%

The chart below shows the relationship between the unemployment and labor for participation rates. As unemployment rises, participation rate drops.



Young Adult Education

Education level is a predictor of the ability to reach and sustain economic success. As mentioned previously, workers with a high school diploma or less experience periods of unemployment more frequently than those with post-secondary education and will be excluded from much of the opportunity presented by the forecast job growth. For these reasons, it is important for the workforce development system to encourage high school and post-secondary education completion by all groups; unfortunately, in the NW region, the number of students who do not complete high school within four years (on-time graduation rate) remains at close to twenty percent (20%).

Leading Indicators of Educational Attainment, NW		
School District	5-Year High School Graduation Rate (2018-2019)	Post-Secondary Enrollment (2016)
Anacortes	94%	70% - 74%
Coupeville	94%*	50%- 54%
San Juan Island	94%	70% - 74%
South Whidbey	94%	60% - 64%
Oak Harbor	92%	48%
Bellingham	89%	68%
Blaine	89%	65% - 69%
Ferndale	89%	60%
Orcas Island	88%*	60% - 69%
Burlington-Edison	87%	61%
Lynden	87%	55% - 59%
Meridian	86%*	65%- 69%
Nooksack Valley	81%	65% - 69%
Lopez Island	79%*	40% - 59%
Mount Vernon	79%	54%
La Conner	74%	75% - 79%
Sedro-Woolley	71%	47%
Concrete	70%	45% - 49%
Mount Baker	69%	70% - 74%

* Only 4-year graduation rate

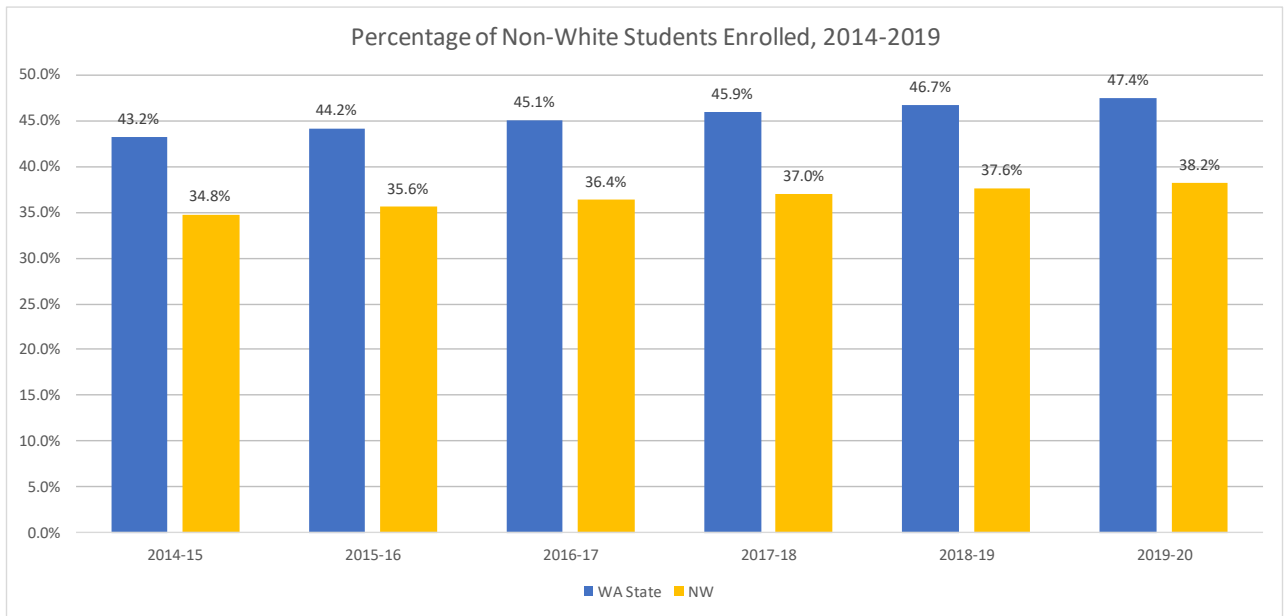
For many young adults, postsecondary educational achievement is proving difficult. More than one-third of Washington’s young adults are not engaging in some form of postsecondary education within a year of their high school graduation (HEDB, HED 2012) yet almost all new jobs being added in the region require training past a high school diploma or GED. This problem becomes more acute in minority populations.

Young Adult Minorities

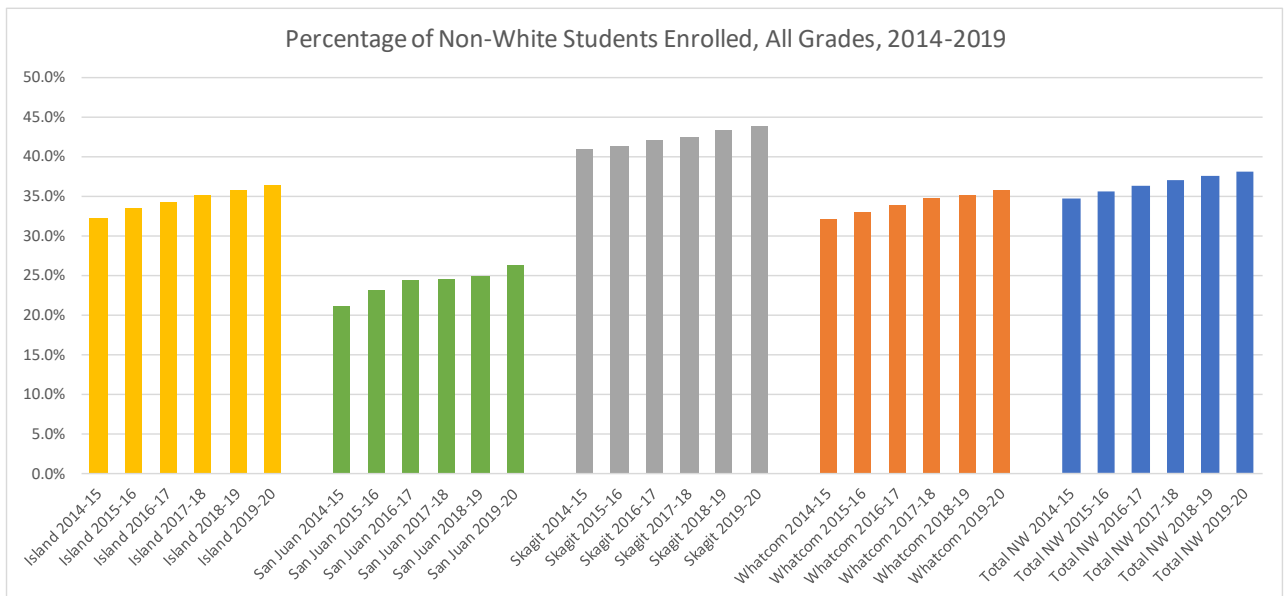
As previously noted, educational attainment varies by race and ethnicity. An observation of high school graduation rates, by race, reveals that non-white students lag behind those of their white classmates. Unfortunately, given the changing demographics of the workforce, this finding indicates that the gap between the skills needed and the skills available will continue to widen, making it imperative that a solution be implemented to improve graduation rates overall and eliminate the barriers that currently affect non-white students.

Graduation Rate by Race, NW, 2018			
	Total Graduation Rate	White Graduation Rate	Non-White Graduation Rate
State Total	80.9%	82.8%	78.8%
La Conner	81.4%	90.0%	74.1%
Anacortes	85.0%	86.3%	79.8%
San Juan Island	85.1%	89.8%	71.8%
Mount Baker	75.5%	77.5%	70.5%
Bellingham	87.4%	89.0%	84.2%
Blaine	84.9%	86.1%	81.8%
Meridian	85.7%	88.6%	80.3%
Nooksack Valley	82.8%	87.7%	76.6%
Orcas Island	87.5%	90.0%	79.3%
South Whidbey	93.0%	92.7%	94.3%
Burlington-Edison	85.6%	94.2%	77.8%
Ferndale	84.0%	88.4%	77.9%
Lynden	85.0%	86.9%	81.3%
Mount Vernon	79.5%	81.2%	78.4%
Coupeville	93.8%	91.1%	100.1%
Lopez Island	78.6%	N/A	N/A
Oak Harbor	88.9%	85.5%	93.7%
Sedro-Woolley	72.6%	75.0%	66.8%
Concrete	62.8%	58.3%	83.0%

Graduation rates identify that minority youth are not attaining the education they need to do well in the workforce. Enrollment rates tell us that this problem is growing. Of youth enrolled in public and private schools, minority enrollment throughout the state grew by 10% between 2014 and 2019, with similar rate of growth in the Northwest. In 2019, minority students comprised 38.2%, or about 2 of every five students in the Northwest.



The percentage of minority students varies widely by county in the Northwest, with San Juan having the lowest representation, and Skagit having the largest. All counties, however, are experiencing growth in this segment.

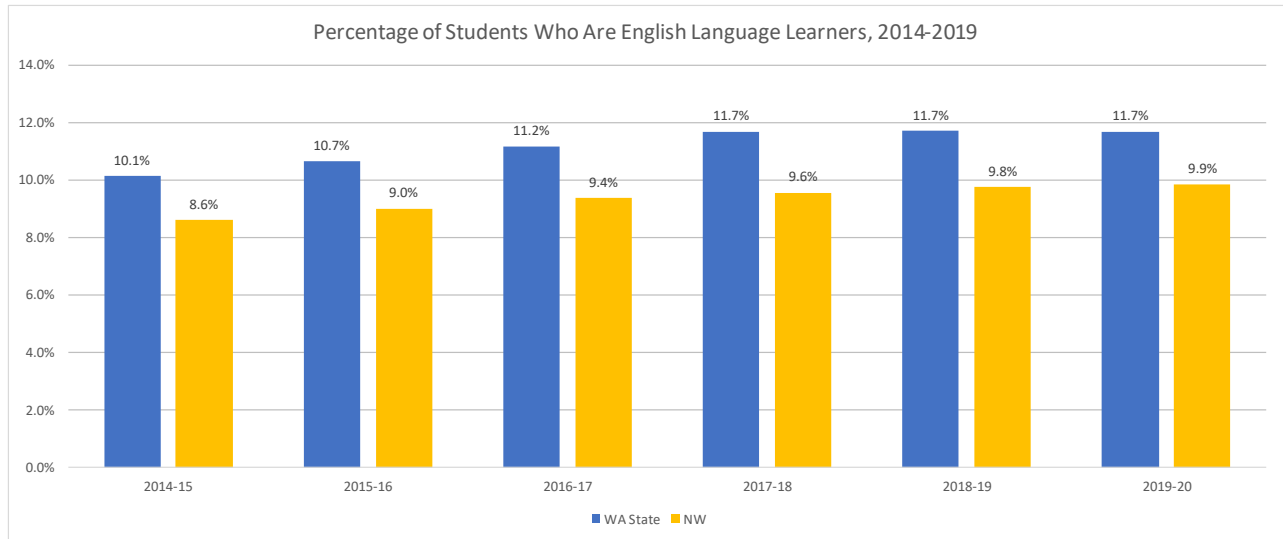


Increases in minority student enrollment clearly indicate growing diversity in the Northwest’s workforce of tomorrow. To ensure minority young adults are prepared to succeed in the workforce and have opportunities to develop competitive skills, they must be encouraged to develop strong academic and computer skills, be exposed to occupations and participate in work experiences in our region’s key industry sectors: health, science, technology, manufacturing, construction, business and commerce fields.

Addressing this challenge is made more difficult by the increasing percentage of students who are considered English language learners (ELL). With almost one in ten students in the Northwest identifying as an ELL, educators must not only diversify the curriculum to include a focus on future

employment, but must also offer effective solutions to help students acquire the language proficiency needed for success in the workplace.

If this can be achieved, there is a real opportunity for minority and under-represented young adults within certain employment sectors, most notably health care, where there is an urgent need for a bi-lingual and bi-cultural workers. This would allow qualified young adults to enter the labor market in high-wage, high-skill jobs if they are provided the necessary career education, academic preparation and technical training.



Unfortunately, the current trend shows that non-white students obtain postsecondary education at rates lower than whites. Since population projections show minority population growth significantly outpacing that of whites, if we cannot change this trend, our future workforce will be significantly less than it is today, widening the gap between the number of workers needed and the number of qualified individuals available to hold those positions.

Our region’s young adults must make stronger connections to the workplace. Strategies important to the success of these groups include completion of high school and post-secondary training and fostering the development of critical work readiness skills. Whether enough young people are in the workforce to replace retiring workers depends on how well and how quickly we engage them in training and employment strategies.

People with Disabilities

People with disabilities face significant labor market barriers. Reliable summary data and trending information for this population is difficult to obtain. Under-reporting is common and data collection has been inconsistent, so the size of this group relative to their labor force participation is hard to determine. Nevertheless, census data, summarized in the table below, tell us that individuals with a disability are much less likely to participate in the workforce than other groups and, when they do participate, experience unemployment at higher rates than the general population. That said, the Northwest is keeping pace or doing slightly better than Washington State in encouraging workforce participation among individuals with a disability and, while the unemployment rate for the total workforce is higher in the Northwest than in WA State overall, the rate for individuals with a disability is lower. This outcome is another piece of evidence demonstrating that demand for qualified workers in the Northwest outstrips the

available supply.

Comparison of People With a Disability to Total Population				
	WA State		NW	
	Total Population	Population W/Disability	Total Population	Population W/Disability
Total Population (16+)	5,647,697	465,352	349,811	29,009
Labor Force Participation Rate	64.2%	44.1%	60.9%	44.6%
Unemployment Rate	6.8%	14.3%	7.5%	13.5%

Analysis of Workforce Development Activities

Northwest Workforce Council is a policy and oversight Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) responsible for organizing a comprehensive, region-wide response to the challenges of building a highly skilled workforce. As defined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) (Opportunity Act), Public Law 128-113, the Council maintains majority private-sector business representation to ensure the voices of local employers – as key customers of the system – inform policy-setting and decision making. The Council works as an equal partner with local elected officials.

Northwest Workforce Council strategically oversees the quality and design of the local workforce development system; comprised of all of the public and private investments and activities undertaken to ensure that individuals are both employable and have jobs, and simultaneously to ensure companies can find and develop the skilled workforce they need to be successful in their marketplace.

The business of integrated workforce development is strengthening the connection between responding to employer needs and providing qualified job candidates. Integration of services across the workforce system is seen as a way to respond to customers’ expectations that access to jobs and qualified applicants should be convenient and user friendly.

In its broadest sense, workforce development is about:

- Ensuring a K-12 education system that equips students with skills to excel;
- Coordinating a system of training providers that responds effectively to employer needs;
- Ensuring a postsecondary education system that works closely with business;
- Promoting the importance of lifelong learning;
- Increasing employer-sponsored training and education opportunities for workers; and
- Identifying and investing in the development of a workforce for the region’s key industry sectors.

The Council, in multiple productive partnerships, has a systematic approach to workforce development programs in the Northwest Workforce Development Area (WDA), comprised of Whatcom, Skagit, Island, and San Juan counties.

The Council, working with local elected officials, oversees a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Council and workforce development partners regarding the operation and shared costs of the workforce delivery system in the local area.

The Council also monitors the development and operation of WorkSource Centers, also known as *American Job Centers*, the community-based, one-stop career centers, which serve as convenient

public access points to the workforce development system, where services have fundamental characteristics which:

- Are focused on the customer, while organized to the needs of job seekers, students and other program participants, workers and businesses;
- Are designed so that people can move easily among and between programs and the workplace;
- Meet the needs of learners, including those who have been traditionally under-served in the past due to real or perceived barriers;
- Provide customized support services such as career counseling, child care and financial aid;
- Are competency-based using Workforce Skill Standards so that all students and other trainees are able to master the skills and knowledge they require in as much or as little time as they need to do so;
- Are coordinated with private sector training programs, public education entities, social and other services, and economic development strategies;
- Rely on accurate and current labor market information so that people acquire the skills and knowledge local employers need to remain competitive and productive and workers with those skills are in demand;
- Provide students and workers with a foundation of basic skills as well as the higher levels of skills and knowledge to equip them to be lifelong learners; and
- Are accountable for results and committed to using outcome measures to continuously improve program and system quality.

Framework for Doing Business

The Council is a powerful mechanism for comprehensive, community-wide workforce development planning and coordination. The Council promotes the alignment and integration of education, training and employment efforts coupled closely with economic development strategies. The Council oversees a regional workforce development system that provides funding, direction, and a commitment of support where services exemplify the following shared principles, beliefs, and priorities:

Visionary Leadership

Leadership is a catalyst for change and works to remove barriers to change processes. Leaders inspire, motivate, and encourage the entire workforce to contribute, to be innovative, and to embrace change. Senior leaders set direction, create a customer focus, establish clear and visible values, and build high expectations.

Market Responsive

The system is driven by the demands of customers, particularly employer customers. Employment and training programs should meet an identified need. Time and resources are focused on matters that create customer value or build upon the system's ability to do so.

Comprehensive

The system strives to build capacity of communities to engage each other in partnerships

that balance priorities, share resources and work towards improvements. As a whole, the system offers a wide array of services to those in need, whatever their need, accordingly.

Outcome and Results Focused

The system must produce results to establish and maintain its relevance. The workforce system is driven by the Council's comprehensive plan based on the needs of the local labor market and the system's overall performance to meet outcome-based goals. Each component program's measurement of concrete results contributes to the performance of the workforce system but they do not define that system in and of themselves.

Quality Conscious

The system provides services of the highest quality. Feedback from customers is measured and acted upon to drive improvements in individual programs. Continuous improvement is achieved by challenging the status-quo and seeking a better way. Creative problem solving and shared learning are embraced, including continuous improvement of existing approaches and significant change or innovation.

Customer Friendly

The system (and all its parts) should be easily accessible, easily navigable, flexible, and adaptable to changing demand. It must be well known and "transparent" to all its potential customers.

Integrated Service Delivery

System management and oversight are independent of any single program or service provider. A single set of strategic goals, plans, objectives, standards, and evaluation criteria apply to all the various component programs of the workforce development system. This consistency keeps service providers aware of and focused on overall service quality and overall customer satisfaction, and ensures they are working together as an integrated system rather than as a collection of free-standing entities.

Northwest Workforce System Partnership

The Northwest Workforce Development Area has had a functional partnership in place since 1992 in Whatcom County and since 1994 in Skagit, San Juan, and Island Counties. The objective of the partnership effort is the attainment of shared principles, beliefs, and priorities, across programs and across providers as expressed in the Council's Framework for Doing Business (above).

WIOA requires six (6) core programs in the workforce development system and recommends other, related programs. Each program was established to fulfill certain purposes for specific populations of customers. In most cases, these purposes and eligible populations are specified by state or federal statute. Rules established by agencies provide greater specificity to guide staff in carrying out their programs. Although these program designs may make sense in and of themselves, when viewed in combination, they often create a confusing array of government services to the customers they are intended to serve. The integration of these programs into a single workforce development system improves customer access and ensures better coordination of the delivery of workforce development services.

Integration of services requires a partnership among key agencies that are committed to a shared

vision of an integrated, customer focused service delivery system. Integration means blurring and eliminating the lines between programs and creating one system that delivers on customer expectations. Integrated service is a mechanism designed to connect an array of workforce development services for the customer. Service integration requires the ability for multiple systems to find ways to communicate across agency lines about job seekers and businesses. A fundamental strategy employed by NWC in the design of an integrated system of service delivery has been the identification and development of [Key System Integrators](#):

- Quality Standards
- Skill Standards
- Performance Outcomes
- Assessment
- Staff Skills and Knowledge
- Information
- Technology

As work evolves and the scope of design activities effect additional community stakeholders, the Council has restructured its processes and increased outreach and accessibility to these stakeholders. As well, subteams invite interested or invested community service providers and others to participate in the design and research work they undertake on behalf of their team.

A partnership-based governance structure is established through an inter-agency, cross-functional, team-based management approach. This governance structure is designed to hold partners accountable to the Council's mission and goals, to empower mid-managers and line staff with decision-making authority for the design and management of the system, and is intended to manage both the performance and continuous quality improvement of the system.

The Opportunity Act retains the nationwide system of one-stop centers – American Job Center(s) – which directly provide an array of employment services and connect customers to work-related training and education. WIOA furthers a high quality one-stop center system by continuing to align investments in workforce, education, and economic development to regional in-demand jobs. It places emphasis on one-stops achieving results for jobseekers, workers, and businesses. WIOA reinforces the partnerships and strategies necessary for one-stops to provide job seekers and workers with the high-quality career services, education and training, and supportive services they need to get good jobs and stay employed, and to help businesses find skilled workers and access other supports, including education and training for their current workforce.

The Northwest's strong workforce development system includes two community colleges, a technical college, a tribal college, a regional university, apprenticeship training, twenty school districts with secondary vocational programs, three WorkSource one-stop career centers, the Friday Harbor Career Center, a Job Corps Center, and a variety of other state and local programs for adults and young adults needing assistance entering or transitioning into employment.

A review of the workforce development programs and services indicates the area has thoughtfully targeted its employment and training resources toward developing a skilled workforce for a number of its key industries and sectors. These include health and allied services, advanced manufacturing (including marine manufacturing), and construction. The area continues to respond to the need for a skilled workforce in the rapidly changing workplace. Training in technical areas includes: information technology and cyber-security, healthcare, welding, and

process and manufacturing technology have each evolved in direct response to developing employer and market needs.

One of the strengths of the Northwest area is the number of two-year and certificate programs offered through Bellingham Technical, Whatcom Community, Skagit Valley, and Northwest Indian Colleges. Western Washington University has a variety of baccalaureate and market- driven post-baccalaureate programs. The colleges utilize a strategic and system-wide approach in serving the diverse population of shared customers within the workforce development system. Youth, adults, dislocated workers and the under-employed enhance their skills and prepare for viable employment through a multi-layered approach, including education, upgrading skills, funding support and blended wrap around services through the colleges and multiple community partner agencies.

REGIONAL SECTOR STRATEGIES

The Council continues its efforts to align training and service delivery with high-demand occupations and skill clusters in health and allied services, manufacturing, and construction. Industry engagements often include broad participation from industry leadership, organized labor, educators, and workforce and economic development leadership around industry specific issues in multiple venues and formats. Industry panels, public-private partnerships working together to improve the skills of workers in industries vital to our region, are one such forum.

In support of this sector focus WIOA training funds are targeted to identified sectors and occupations. The Council pursues additional funding sources to further its strategies in support of the region's key industry sectors. Industry tables examine workforce needs and create

actionable plans to meet those needs. The Council executes these action plans through its strong, collaborative partnerships and through its resource investment of training dollars and other funds. The Council has achieved success with numerous industry-led, sector-specific initiatives, and benefits from sector representation on the membership of the board.

Health and Allied Services

Northwest Alliance for Health Care Services (NWAHCS) was established in 2000 at the request of industry leadership to assist them in closing a workforce supply gap. Since that time, it has tackled many of the industries thorniest workforce issues and developed a local response and solutions for many of these. This proven industry partnership table's work is diffused throughout the workforce development system, operating on mutual respect, knowledge and trust developed after many years of working together to find and implement local solutions.

The region hosts five hospitals, private practice medical clinics, long term care and skilled nursing facilities. Each aspect of the industry represents opportunity for wages, growth, and sustainable careers. Each industry segment is represented at NWAHCS and brings its unique, or shared, workforce challenges to the table for discussion and collaborative action. NWAHCS and its partner organizations have been highly successful in attracting competitive and industry-sourced dollars into the region to aid in addressing workforce issues.

Advanced Manufacturing, including Marine Manufacturing

These industries offer family wage and better jobs and require competently trained workforces, supply chain providers, and auxiliary service businesses. Industrial scale manufacturing in the region includes four petroleum refineries and a large aluminum smelter. Aerospace manufacturing businesses here produce everything from aircraft interiors, value-added honeycomb products, and composite fuselage components. Smaller scale manufacturing includes noteworthy companies in dairy parlor technologies, orthotics, and recreational equipment. The marine manufacturing subsector remains vibrant with active waterfront marine manufacturing industries in Bellingham, Anacortes, and Freeland. The region is host to many smaller marine manufacturing, repair, and retrofit companies which include specialty shops such as custom fiberglass and marine electric. An international dock company and the Northwest Center of Excellence for Marine Manufacturing and Technology are located here.

Construction

The Northwest region had one of the most dramatic losses of construction industry jobs during

the Great Recession. As the economy has picked up industrial, commercial, municipal and residential construction has experienced a resurgence. However, many workers left the industry during the slow economic period, taking important skills and knowledge with them. This is compounded by an aging workforce in an industry known for taking a physical toll. Many who left the industry were its new labor force entrants, further exacerbating the need for talented, skilled workers. To create a pipeline of new workers, the Council has supported Apprenticeship and Pre-Apprenticeship training as a vital work-based training modality, a proven strategy of providing training to job seekers leading to well-paying jobs and solid futures. Apprenticeships support workforce needs in the manufacturing and construction key industry sectors.

The region is home to numerous industrial and municipal construction firms. This is due, in part, to the region's four petroleum refineries which often conduct large-scale "turn-around" construction projects and to our proximity to Alaska, another traditional source of large scale projects.

REGIONAL SERVICE STRATEGIES

With the trends and changes in workforce demographics and the economy identified in section I and the developed sector strategies in section II, Northwest Workforce Council and its partners face challenges in assisting all residents to prepare for, find and keep employment in local high-wage, high-demand industry clusters. Careful planning targeting these challenges will help the system respond to the needs of industry, and workers.

While current economic conditions have impacts across the spectrum of industries in the region, competition to find highly qualified workers remains. Until more workers gain the skill and knowledge competencies employers need, the growing skill gap will likely slow economic recovery.

Over the next five years, labor shortages may become critical as Baby Boomers retire without the institutional transfer of their skills to younger workers. The labor shortage, especially in the growing number of occupations requiring high skills, will be exacerbated by a young adult population that appears to be delaying its acquisition of workplace and occupational skills. This may be a result of limited meaningful “first job” opportunities and/or a general disengagement from the world of work. The increase of English language learner workers who have basic literacy skill deficiencies is another factor adding to the labor shortage for the occupations requiring post-secondary training and credentials.

Employers remain concerned too few young people consider careers in advanced manufacturing or trades and are unaware of both skills needed and the career’s financial rewards. As experienced workers retire, they become difficult to replace because many entry-level workers are ill-prepared to meet the skill demands of work and lack the preparation required to advance. This underscores the region’s need for a well-conceived, coordinated and executed pipeline strategy.

As the economy evolves to becoming more knowledge-based, technology-dependent and global, the requirements on current workers continue to be life-long learners who gain new skills and education throughout their careers. On average, workers hold more than 10 jobs between the ages of 18 and 40, this means employers require workers with more applied work ready skills, and workers must continually retool and upgrade their competencies.

Education remains an indicator of employment success for young adults. In the 2014-15 school years, high school dropout rates for all students in the region ranged from 7.9 to 19.7 percent. These rates increase dramatically with low income and limited English-speaking students. Those who graduated often lack adequate workplace skills for entry-level positions; this lack of work experience limits opportunities for youth. Increasing costs of tuition and fees makes it challenging for individuals to obtain the education or training needed to enter or advance in their chosen career field. As a result, many young adults are disconnected from the labor force.

It is important to continue to strengthen the connections between K-12 and post-secondary

education and industry to promote career opportunities, foster the development of critical work readiness skills, and to expand work-based learning opportunities.

Long-term unemployed individuals lacking recent or relevant work experience are challenged by a competitive job market which demands contemporary skills. Older workers face a high rate of chronic unemployment, leading to their disconnection from the labor market. They are also competing with the underemployed. Innovative approaches to retool and reengage the long term unemployed continue to be necessary.

To remain competitive in the marketplace, a long-term commitment for a skilled, flexible and technically competent workforce is necessary. We must continue to develop and implement strategies to effectively match dislocated workers to existing job opportunities. This will entail providing necessary short-term training, certifications and on-the job training to rapidly fill available positions and return workers to employment as soon as possible. We must also continue to address the underlying skill shortages that exist for projected medium and high skill jobs in the area's key industry sectors and clusters.

The workforce system will be asked to serve more people at a fast pace with more flexibility. It will require us to increase our engagement with industry, education and economic development partners to create innovative solutions to respond to rapidly changing industry needs and demographic shifts.

The following strategic service actions and initiatives for the Northwest workforce development system support the strategic and sector goals of the Council (see section III). It should be noted rapid and unpredictable changes to the regional, state, and national economy make this plan a "living" document. Changes in course or ability to accomplish all strategies in the plan may well be compromised by events beyond the power of the Council to influence. It is the Council's intent to pursue the following actions to the best of its ability and modify the plan as circumstances warrant.

Goal A. Lead the Region's One-Stop Career Center System Which:

A-1 Aligns education, employment and training services

- a) Leverage time and investment resources with partner agencies to support training and education
- b) Support short-term training options to maximize funding and minimize training time
- c) Align WorkSource service delivery system with state and regional economic priorities
- d) Increase collaborations between education institutions, community partners and industry
- e) Analyze and improve access to WorkSource system services for youth and people who experience barriers
 - i. Ensure outreach is effective for each of WIOA's 14 identified target populations
 - ii. Services are tailored and customized to individuals' unique needs
 - iii. Services, products, and facilities employ the principles of Universal Design

- iv. WorkSource facilities incorporate principles of Customer Centered Design

A-2 Reinforces retraining and retention of the current workforce

- a) Provide high quality labor market information that enables workers to respond to changes in technology or skill demands of business and informs workers of opportunities to improve their skills.
- b) Advocate for continued availability and expansion of training programs accessible to employees through flexible times and locations, and through hybrid and on-line delivery
- c) Bring education and industry together to identify skills that enhance worker retention and promotion
- d) Encourage business investment in worker training and retraining by promoting facility use for training, flexible work scheduling, and matching funds
- e) Provide and market services to business to provide upgrade and transition training to current workers

A-3 Provides valued services and dependable results

- a) Strengthen the agility of WorkSource system partners response to emerging or changing employer needs
- b) Make WorkSource services more widely known and available
 - i. Deploy WorkSource marketing products
 - ii. Advocate for improved first point of contact introductions (web-based, place bound)
- c) Champion and implement opportunities for job seeker skill growth aligned with labor market demand
- d) Sustain and/or grow employer satisfaction with WorkSource services

A-4 Embeds the principles of continuous quality improvement

- a) Maintain a rigorous one-stop operator and site certification process based upon the quality principles of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award
- b) Foster a culture and daily practice of continuous quality improvement within the region's WorkSource Career Centers
- c) Continue to refine and increase use of the region's knowledge management system, known as DAWN – Dynamically Aligned Workforce Network
- d) Focus attention on system outcome performance through a quarterly report to the board's oversight body, Quality Assurance Committee

Goal B. Strengthen the Regional Workforce Development System Which:

B-1 Expands ways in which business is engaged

- a) Conduct and/or participate in regional conferences on key industry sectors to foster the exchange of ideas and innovations.
- b) Convene and/or participate in local industry forums and tables to identify industry's emerging or unmet talent/workforce needs
- c) Expand the number of businesses participating in work-integrated learning (i.e. internships, pre-apprenticeship, on the job training, mentorship).
- d) Grow partnerships with industries to market their career opportunities to youth, parents, and other advisors and influencers.

B-2 Tailors its services and products responsive to business

- a) Provide high quality labor market information that enables programs to respond to changes in the labor market and informs students and customers about current career opportunities
- b) Increase employers' knowledge and use of valued workforce system services
- c) Engage employers in identifying skill standards and promote training programs that provide skills to industry standards
- d) Grow opportunities for students and job-seekers to build workplace competencies in the classroom and through experiential learning
- e) Advocate for continued availability and expansion of training programs accessible to current workers through flexible times and locations, and through hybrid and on-line delivery

B-3 Leverages resources and aligns strategies of key partners

- a) Enhance coordination between workforce and economic development in key economic clusters
- b) Promote strategies for networking across geographic, professional, business and interest-based communities
- c) Maintain active partnership with other workforce councils and educational and economic development organizations to develop new funding resources
- d) Maintain collaboration with community and technical college partners for coordination of student support resources to maximize student access and success in training.
- e) Align resources to support secondary vocational education programs for high school students that establish educational and employment pipelines in targeted industries.
- f) Leverage resources for work-based experience and internships for high school students aligned with their career pathways that maximize outcomes including program retention, graduation, entry into post-secondary training and employment.
- g) Work with secondary and post-secondary vocation education programs to enhance all partners' performance on State core and Federal common measures

B-4 Partners strategically to strengthen regional competitiveness and job creation

- a) Enhance partnerships with economic development organizations and employers to support regional efforts for business attraction, expansion and job retention
- b) Coordinate business engagement activities to identify talent needs and convene stakeholders to align activities to meet those needs
- c) Collaborate with economic development and education partners to leverage resources, increase efficiency and provide quality business services

B-5 Elevates support of workforce development issues, policies and initiatives

- a) Network at the Federal level with the key workforce staff of US Senators and representatives.
- b) Increase outreach to stakeholders and potential financial partners.
- c) Develop talking points and communication tools to communicate systemic barriers and regulatory and statutory impediments to business success and innovation.
- d) Continue to strengthen the workforce and the Council's profile with the media, key stakeholders and funders.

Goal C. Champion A Systemic Approach to Lifelong Learning Which:

C-1 Is responsive to business and industry needs

- a) Identify training and educational opportunities to support targeted industries' workforce

skill needs

- b) Identify and support training in high demand occupations
- c) Expedite worker training to meet industry and market demands
- d) Collaborate with industry partners to innovate just-in-time trainings tailored to business need
- e) Build training capacity for employer-based recruitment and retention strategies for a multi-generational, multi-cultural workforce

C-2 Enables workers to identify multiple pathways for career success

- a) Introduce K-12 and other young adults, their advisors, and parents to career paths, career opportunities and connecting activities
- b) Expose young adults to activities to broaden knowledge of career path options in high demand industries
- c) Increase work-based learning opportunities that promote career pathways and soft skill development
- d) Support efforts to promote professional technical/vocational and apprenticeship programs.
- e) Provide joint outreach and recruiting efforts with local colleges to engage students in post-secondary education, including pathways

C-3 Offers workers opportunities to upgrade their skills in response to changing workforce needs and challenges

- a) Expand career and education pathways to enter and advance in the workforce
- b) Support continuous learning in all phases of employment: preparation, retention and advancement
- c) Provide learning opportunities for workers to keep pace with evolving technology
- d) Cultivate soft skills through mentorship opportunities with local businesses
- e) Integrate basic skills remediation with long-term training opportunities
- f) Increase participation in adult basic education and high school completion

C-4 Promotes competency-based education and training

- a) Bring education and industry together to identify skill standards that enhance hiring, retention and promotion
- b) Partner with education to enable industry recognized credentialing of skill attainment
- c) Promote attainment of industry recognized certificates and credentials in target industries
- d) Provide high quality labor market information that enables participants to make decisions on career progression and “stacking” of industry recognized credentials
- e) Promote workplace skills attainment and credentialing through KeyTrain, National Work Readiness Credential and other means
- f) Increase the use of credit for prior learning which lead to certificates and credentials

Goal D. Strategically Partner with Regional Economic Development:

- a) Identify opportunities to align education, workforce, and economic development
- b) Leverage resources to achieve common goals

COORDINATION WITH REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

Economic development entities represent the lead organizations in working with business recruitment and retention in each of the Northwest counties. NWC maintains active working relationships with each, which take the form of participation on select committees and teams; two-way consultative relationships for business attraction, retention and growth; Rapid Response activities, including lay-off aversion; workforce analytics and labor market information; collaboration on strategic planning and key sector initiatives; community and service branding; and informal early warning systems to make each other aware of opportunities and threats.

The directors of Island County Economic Development Council (EDC) and Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County (EDASC) are seated on the NWC board. A representative of the Port of Bellingham, Whatcom County's designated Associate Development Organization, is an invitee and regularly attends NWC board meetings.

Examples of current activities include:

- Whatcom County has a standing meeting of practitioners involved in economic development activities, known as "Team Whatcom." NWC actively participates and is part of the "Choose Whatcom" project to grow and attract business to Whatcom County. NWC is highlighted as a resource for business on the project's [Choose Whatcom](#) website: [Recruiting Resources](#).
- Maintaining an active partnership with WWU's Small Business Development Center (SBDC) for business to business outreach promoting WorkSource Services, including On-the-Job and Incumbent Worker training.
- NWC is an active partner of the EDASC and supports EDASC's initiative to promote the Skagit County Maritime Cluster, one of NWC's key industry sectors, marine manufacturing. EDASC also performs business to business outreach promoting WorkSource Services, including On-the-Job and Incumbent Worker training.
- In San Juan County, NWC's Career Center in Friday Harbor adjoins the EDC offices and staff of each agency work closely together on business and workforce projects and presentations. Currently each organization participates on a county committee called "Island Friendly," whose goal is to improve overall customer service and build a San Juan Island brand.

COORDINATION OF TRANSPORTATION AND OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES

NWC takes an energetic and proactive role in the coordination of workforce investment activities throughout the four county region. This philosophy extends to the provision of or referral for supportive services, including transportation and other support needed by those participating in WIOA services under all Titles. Activities that build capacity and effectiveness are fostered; duplicate or inefficient practices are discouraged.

Supportive services are provided when necessary to enable successful participation. Information on availability of supportive services is provided to clients and customers of all WIOA programs. Services may include, but are not limited to: transportation assistance including bus passes and short-term provision of prepaid gas cards. Carpooling among those engaged in group training activities is encouraged. Other Title I funded support services available include childcare services; clothing assistance for interviews and internships; emergency housing assistance; safety and job-specific clothing and equipment upon placement in unsubsidized employment.

Partners remain aware and updated on supportive services through a variety of mechanisms, including use of DAWN, the knowledge management system utilized by the WorkSource partnership in the Northwest. DAWN includes information on eligibility for the various forms of supportive services, and the referral process and related information needed to assure clients can access the services identified. These are coordinated with other community resources identified by partnership staff and through use of the Washington State 2-1-1 website: <https://wa211.org/>.

In addition, Northwest Workforce Council and partner staff regularly attend scheduled Community Resource Network (CRN) meetings. These meetings include representation from a broad network of community service providers, faith-based organizations, healthcare providers, transit providers and others. A feature of each meeting is sharing information on available community resources. For example, energy assistance availability or transportation vouchers offered by faith-based organizations. Partner staff attending assure that, as new support service resources are identified, they are reported at WorkSource all staff meetings and included on DAWN for access by partner staff.

The WorkSource Whatcom and Skagit Centers participate with their local transit providers in free bus pass programs making these transportation resources available to any job seeker with demonstrable need in order to facilitate their job search.

CROSS-REGIONAL SECTOR STRATEGY

Cross-regional sector strategies are developed to improve access and performance outcomes for targeted populations, to test innovative models or practices to determine their efficacy, sustainability and scalability, and to address identified gaps in services and improve service outcomes.

A 2019 award to Workforce Snohomish, in collaboration with Northwest Workforce Council (Skagit, Whatcom, San Juan and Island Counties), Skagit and Snohomish STEM Networks, and Northwest Educational Service District 189, has established a foundation for regional coordination and shared goals to align Career Connected Learning (CCL) initiatives and collaborations into a coherent sector and business-focused framework. The intention is that this framework will increase the availability and enable the alignment of services to support engagement of youth and young adults in CCL opportunities – from Career Exploration (e.g., career fairs) – Career Preparation (e.g., pre-apprenticeships, job shadows) and Career Launch (e.g., internships linked to industry, apprenticeships). In addition, the partnership seeks to strengthen business and education partnerships aligned to regional workforce supply and demand needs to support the expansion of CCL opportunities in the region.

In 2019, under the auspices of the Career Connect regional coordinating network initiative, NW Workforce Council and Workforce Snohomish formed the North Puget Sound Regional Coordinating Network, a regional Board to guide the joint initiative, effectively leverage existing investments in advancing opportunities for youth and young adults to engage in career connected learning, and establish a unified system that promotes and nurtures these opportunities. Strategies and tactics will be employed by the cross-regional partners to improve outcomes and they include:

- Leverage existing conveners/convenings to disseminate and engage stakeholders in regional strategy and promote CCL and collaboration.
- Coordinate with intermediaries and other local and statewide stakeholders to solicit input on information that would strengthen understanding, navigation and engagement in CCL for employers, youth, parents and adults.
- Establish and maintain catalogue of potential and approved Career Launch programs in the region and articulate their alignment with sector strategies and in-demand occupations.

Each step in the development and dissemination of the regional career connected learning plan is intended to ensure alignment of regional resources, without duplication of efforts. Additionally, solicitation of feedback from a wide cross-section of community will assure equitable access for those furthest from opportunity.

Cross-regional partners will track success by both increasing opportunity, as well as measuring

progress towards the goals of:

60% of K-12 young adults engage in Career Launch programs by the class of 2030;

100% of K-12 young adults engage in Career Exploration & Awareness programming by class of 2030.

Regions established under Career Connect Washington are based on Educational Service District boundaries, with King and Pierce counties forming a separate Regional Coordinating Network from Snohomish, Skagit, Whatcom, San Juan and Island counties. The economic dependencies and synergies between Snohomish and King Counties (Seattle-Bellevue-Everett MSA) require collaboration between the King-Pierce Regional Network and the North Puget Sound Regional Coordinating Network. As these networks are relatively new, specific collaboration plans are still forming.

REGIONAL PERFORMANCE NEGOTIATION AND EVALUATION

The indicators of WIOA performance for the core program partners focus on having a job, earning in that job, and acquiring skills as a result of program participation. Specifically, the following metrics are identified:

- Employment in the 2nd and 4th quarters after program exit;
- Median earnings in the 2nd quarter following program exit; and
- Participation in occupational or academic skill training, skill gains and credentials.

Targets are set on a two-year cycle through negotiation between the Washington State Training Board and the Federal Department of Labor. Within Washington State, a WIOA performance and accountability workgroup, comprised of representatives from each WDA, meets on a regular basis to consider both historic and current data as it affects targets for each of the WIOA performance indicators. This group is tasked with proposing initial targets as a starting point for each of the WDAs. The NWC's Deputy Director participates on the statewide WIOA performance and accountability workgroup, consulting with regional service providers to represent their views. The Deputy Director also reports to the Board on the progress of the negotiations. (See Section IV and Attachment I for more information.)

SECTION III

STRATEGIC VISION

To create a robust, sustainable, regional economy.

MISSION

The preparation of a skilled, successful workforce aligned to the needs of business and industry.

Strategic Goals

A. Lead the Region's One-Stop Career Center System Which:

- Aligns education, employment and training services
- Reinforces retraining and retention of the current workforce
- Provides valued services and dependable results for business and the workforce
- Embeds the principles of continuous quality improvement

B. Strengthen the Regional Workforce Development System Which:

- Expands ways in which business is engaged
- Tailors its services and products responsive to business
- Leverages resources and aligns strategies of key partners
- Partners strategically to strengthen regional competitiveness and job creation
- Elevates support of workforce development issues, policies, and initiatives

C. Champion a Systemic Approach to Lifelong Learning Which:

- Is responsive to business and industry needs
- Enables workers to identify opportunities and pathways for career success
- Offers workers opportunities to upgrade their skills in response to changing workforce needs and challenges
- Promotes competency-based education and training programs

D. Strategically Partner with Regional Economic Development:

- Identify opportunities to align education, workforce and economic development
- Leverage resources to achieve common goals

SUSTAINING A HIGH PERFORMING LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

NWC seeks to actively engage its members in matters of strategic importance to its mission. The board's committees meet weeks in advance of full board meetings. Minutes of committee meetings are distributed to board members one week in advance of full board meetings, thereby allowing members time to review and prepare for presentations and discussion during the meeting.

Board membership is reflective of the board's strategic focus on key industry sectors, with industry leaders representing advanced manufacturing, health and allied services, and construction holding seats. Infusing board conversations with insight from these leaders helps the board retain its focus on developing trends and needs within its targeted sectors and aids it in making strategic resource investments. Additionally, the board seeks input from subject matter experts to inform its work on matters of strategic relevance.

The Board maintains its strategic focus through:

- Review of labor market data and its analysis
- Convening and participating in sector tables
- Maintaining partnership tables to obtain continuous stakeholder input
- The Regional Access Advisory Committee

Northwest Workforce Council uses an active committee structure that provides systematic processes to set policies, fashion strategies, foster interagency coordination, and oversee the implementation of comprehensive strategic and operational plans for economic and human resource development.

Committees meet quarterly. In addition to a seat on the Board of Directors, each Council member also serves on one standing committee. All items go through the appropriate standing committee before passing to the full Council. If a Council member has an interest in a specific issue or wishes to address it, effort should be made to do so while the issue is still at the committee level.

Agenda packets are mailed prior to the published committee meeting date which contains information to be discussed and voted on at the meeting. Agendas indicate those items intended for a vote, background items to an emerging issue, or for information purposes. Committee members may discuss each issue prior to bringing a recommendation to the full board of directors.

All committee meetings are open. The general public is afforded opportunity to be heard at each meeting, at a time designated by the chairperson.

BOARD STRATEGY FOR PROGRAM AND RESOURCE ALIGNMENT

Northwest Workforce System Partnership

The Northwest Workforce Development Area has had a functional partnership in place since 1992 in Whatcom County and since 1994 in Skagit, San Juan, and Island Counties. The objective of the partnership effort is the attainment of shared principles, beliefs, and priorities, across programs and across providers as expressed in the Council's Framework for Doing Business.

The value of partnership is achieved when each organization finds it can achieve enhanced performance and customer satisfaction through collaborative efforts, shared processes, and systems which allow partners to:

- Share information so that the information becomes system knowledge and is used by all for the benefit of the customer
- Provide an environment of collegiality which supports a culture of doing whatever it takes to deliver quality services to the customer
- Promote individual agency goals as goals of the collective so as to create strategies which support each partner, which in turn enhances the performance of each partner
- Coordinate planning across multiple programs
- Assist in meeting state and federal mandates to coordinate and collaborate
- Provide a learning environment and culture for staff to build and practice new skills

Three types of teams inform the workforce service delivery system:

Regional Access Advisory Committee

This committee is convened by the Council, chaired by a Council member, and consists of each partner program's representative. All of the Opportunity Act's required program partners' leaders are represented. This team is responsible for visioning a unified and integrated system of service delivery that, in part, affords improved access for populations with a wide variety of barriers, including economic, geographic, physical, mental and/or behavioral health. The role of this team is the removal of programmatic, process, cultural, and institutional barriers that get in the way of achieving the vision and the realignment of processes within their own agencies to achieve integrated service delivery, both in the Center environment and within the workforce system.

Process Improvement Teams

A team designated as a process improvement team is responsible and accountable for continuous improvements to a specific process. These teams may have created a product, service, or process or they may be chartered to continue process improvement of a product, service or process created by a work team. This type of team is ongoing.

Work Teams

Either the Partner Management Team or the Regional Access Advisory Committee charters and supports work teams who may create a needed product, service, and/or process. A work team is disbanded when the product, service, and/or process they are responsible for designing is completed.

The Northwest Workforce Partner Management Team

The Northwest Workforce Partner Management Team is charged with achieving consistent quality and consistent customer outcomes in the workforce development system's operational performance. It serves as an ongoing process improvement team. It is responsible for accomplishing the 'systems level' work to achieve the goals in the regional workforce strategic plan and ensuring the system operating components defined in the Partnership Memorandum of Understanding and WorkSource Certification are developed and widely deployed. The Partner Management Team's broad operational focus transcends the tactical operational focus of other teams. The Partner Management Team, in coordination with the One Stop System Operator, has the authority to direct and task the work of these teams to achieve system outcomes. The team is empowered to take action within the scope of its charter and reports its recommendations for items outside of that scope of work to leadership. The team reports to the system's strategic leadership, both in taking direction and elevating issues of strategic import and/or resource deployment.

Activities of the Partner Management Team include:

- Identify and remove process barriers which impede system alignment
- Identify and improve core processes to attain maximum effectiveness and customer outcomes
- Align internal core processes and procedures across the workforce development system to ensure they are systematic and saturated
- Champion process improvements made to core processes and ensure implantation of the systems, processes, and tools required to implement
- Promote system performance and its customers' satisfaction
- Ensure procedures facilitate a culture of continuous improvement
- Align procedures to Northwest Workforce Council's core values for the workforce development system, WorkSource system operational policies, and WorkSource certification requirements
- Assist in the development and coordination of biannual system strategies to affect anticipated future workforce needs
- Provide the necessary project management to achieve its own work plan and to ensure effective, system-wide implementations
- Identify and foster new relationships with community stakeholders and service providers

Management Team membership is comprised of management staff from each full partner organization (NWC MOU signatories), and One Stop System Operator. The Partner Management Team calls upon subject matter experts as indicated. Partner organizations' leadership shall nominate managers appropriate to serve on the team. The team is self-facilitating and self-managed.

Northwest Regional Partnership Teams



As work evolves and the scope of design activities affect additional community stakeholders, the partnership increases outreach and engagement of other important stakeholders. The partnership actively engages with the following organizations and entities, among others:

- Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County
- Port of Bellingham (ADO)
- Economic Development Council for Island County
- San Juan County Economic Development Council
- Small Business Development Center (WWU)
- Council of Governments
- Labor and apprenticeship organizations
- K-12 educational agencies including:
 - The region’s school districts; and
 - Northwest Educational Services District No. 189
- Cascades Job Corps Center
- The Opportunity Council
- Community Action of Skagit County
- Lummi, Nooksack, Samish, Upper Skagit & Swinomish Indian Nations
- Division of Child Support (DSHS)
- Bellingham Regional Chamber of Commerce
- Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce
- Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce
- Center for Economic and Business Research (WWU)
- Center of Excellence in Marine Manufacturing & Technology
- Technology Alliance Group for Northwest Washington

DESCRIPTION OF PARTNER TRAINING PROGRAMS

The following is a brief overview of the types of programs and services offered by the Northwest workforce development system. These programs and activities reflect resources available to train, upgrade, and assist the jobseeker in obtaining employment while providing the employing community a qualified workforce to retain and grow viable business and industry.

Training Institutions

One of the strengths of the Northwest area is the number of two- and four-year degrees, certificate programs and continuing education offered through Bellingham Technical, Whatcom Community, Skagit Valley, and Northwest Indian Colleges. Western Washington University has a variety of baccalaureate and market-driven post-baccalaureate programs.

Bellingham Technical College

Bellingham Technical College (BTC) currently offers over 39 professional technical, nine direct transfer degrees, two bachelor of applied science degrees, and 55 certificates. Recent program additions reflect the region's high-demand industries and include new offerings in Business Management, Water and Waste Water Treatment, Cosmetology, and a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Technology.

Bellingham Technical College's workforce collaboration level and graduate job placement success rates are outstanding - and critical to our success. Over 300 community members and industry and labor representatives serve as advisors to BTC's programs, participate in career fairs, support programs and students, and work with the College to develop programs and offer internship and industry experience opportunities to students. Long-standing, critical workforce organization partners such as Northwest Workforce Council and Northwest Economic Development Council, K-12 educational partners, and other community organizations help inform College training efforts.

BTC serves a wide variety of students, many of them first-time college students from under-represented populations. The College is committed to focusing resources and program development on support programs and instructional models that can help all students reach their educational goals.

Whatcom Community College

Ranked among the top community colleges in the nation, Whatcom Community College (WCC) contributes to the vitality of the local community by providing quality education in academic transfer, professional-technical, lifelong learning, and continuing education, preparing students for active citizenship in a global society and meeting the workforce needs of regional employers. Programs are augmented by robust student advising, financial aid, job search, cooperative learning, and externship placements and support to ensure that all students receive the education, knowledge, life skills and training they need to be successful in both academic and industry settings.

Whatcom offers two-year transfer and applied degrees, 34 shorter certificates in business, health, legal and education fields, a new Bachelor of Applied Science degree in IT Networking and non-credit opportunities for professional development, including continuing education for professionals to maintain industry credentials and certifications, and customized training for

particular industries and businesses. WCC is also recognized as a regional and national leader in cybersecurity education. WCC's programs are informed by community employers and continuously reviewed and improved for currency. Faculty prepare students for success in small classroom settings as well as labs that simulate the real-world work environment. Whatcom graduates have the skills and education to succeed and grow in our community and job market.

WCC provides contextualized learning across a variety of programs, including Integrated Basic Education & Skills Training (IBEST), English as a second language and a High School 21+ program that support those students with additional educational needs in order to be college ready.

Skagit Valley College

Skagit Valley College's (SVC) Strategic Plan Core Themes of Equity in Access, Achievement, and Community are at the heart of the College's work. SVC's educational programs are aligned with regional and state workforce and economic development strategies because SVC closely collaborates with Northwest Workforce Council, two economic development councils in the district, ports, municipalities, K-12 school districts, and industry and labor representatives to develop a program mix representative of identified skills gaps and industry needs. Additionally, each program consults an advisory committee made up of local industry representatives. Partnerships and the pursuit of grant funding has allowed SVC to continue to expand Nursing and Allied Health, Manufacturing, Composites, Marine, and Fire Protection programs.

SVC offers 37 two-year degrees and 82 certificates with an emphasis in Health Science, Human Services, Trades and Technology, and Public Resources. SVC also offers two baccalaureate programs: a Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) in Environmental Conservation and a BAS in Applied Management. Through its partnership with the Innovation Partnership Zone for Value Added Agriculture, the College has developed a Craft Brewing Academy which serves the brewing industry throughout the Pacific Northwest. Reflective of local industry, SVC also hosts the Northwest Center of Excellence for Marine manufacturing and Technology.

By using the I-Best model in an array of Professional/Technical and transfer programs, SVC gives students an accelerated experience to prepare them to take college courses. Additionally, by offering programs such as High School 21+ Adult High School Diploma, Open Doors High School Completion, INVEST, and English Language Acquisition, the College continues to invest in making education possible for all students.

Northwest Indian College

Northwest Indian College (NWIC) provides post-secondary educational opportunities for Native peoples and other area residents. The only accredited 2-year and 4-year tribal college in Washington, Oregon and Idaho, NWIC is located on the Lummi Reservation in Whatcom County, with six full service extension sites at the Swinomish Reservation in Skagit County, Port Gamble S'Klallam in Kitsap County, Tulalip in Snohomish County, Muckleshoot in King County, Nisqually in Thurston County, and Nez Perce in Idaho.

It houses the National Indian Center for Marine Environmental Research and Education. The college offers a Bachelor of Science in Native Environmental Science, Bachelor of Arts Degree in Native Studies Leadership, Bachelor of Arts in Tribal Governance & Business Management, Bachelor of Arts in Community Advocates and Responsive Education (CARE) in Human Service, and two year and transfer degree programs in; Associate of Arts and Science in Native

Environmental Science, Business and Entrepreneurship, Public and Tribal Administration, General Direct Transfer Degree, Life Sciences, Information Technology, Early Childhood Education, Chemical Dependency Studies, and other Individualized Programs. NWIC also offers the following Certificate Programs: Computer Repair Technician, Construction Trades, Individualized Studies, and in addition offers the following Completion Awards: Entrepreneurship, initial Early Childhood Education Certificate, Short Early Childhood Education Certificate of Specialization, Tribal Casino Management, and Tribal Museum Studies.

The Workforce Education Department provides certificated professional development and vocational training courses in a variety of areas in health professions, construction trades and industrial certifications. Academic, vocational, continuing, and adult basic education is provided in an environment that recognizes and nurtures students' cultural identity. The college also provides business assistance.

Apprenticeship Training

Training for apprentices is offered at Bellingham Technical College and Skagit Valley College. Examples of courses offered include: Industrial Trade Math; Basic Mechanics for Electricians; Welding; Blueprint Reading; Basic Electricity for Mechanics, Millwrights and Non-Electricians; Apprentice Painter; and Apprentice Carpentry. The Electricians, Plumbers, and Pipefitters, and Carpenters Apprenticeship programs all have Technical Training Centers located in Skagit County and will soon be joined by the Western Washington Masonry Trades apprenticeship program. These and four other apprenticeship programs jointly participate in the annual Washington Apprenticeship Vocational Education (WAVE) Tour for high school students from the four northwest counties and Snohomish county. They also participate in recruiting for special programs available to involve adults and young adults in apprenticeship preparation and vocational exploration

Western Washington University

The area's workforce benefits from the presence of a nationally recognized institution of higher education. Continuing education and lifelong learning programs at Western Washington University (WWU) are particularly beneficial to incumbent workers and those seeking to upgrade skills. A variety of post-baccalaureate programs are offered. Western also offers technical and professional degrees well suited to the northwest area's needs; plastics technology, recreation management, computer science, business management, and the physical sciences. Western now offers Bachelor of Science degrees in Electrical Engineering, Manufacturing Engineering, and Plastics & Composites Engineering, and has 2+2 articulation agreements with Bellingham Technical College and Whatcom Community College. The university's RN to BSN Nursing program is in direct response to the region's healthcare industry leadership stated need for advanced trained nursing staffs. The program is founded and sustained upon the strength of collaboration and partnership between the industry and the workforce development system in this region.

Additionally, WWU offers programs during the year for youth that serve as preparatory coursework for a wide variety of future job requirements and interests. These programs cover academic enrichment, leadership training, and understanding private enterprise. The university is a leader in advancing STEM education.

WWU Center for Economic and Business Research

Strategic planning requires accurate and timely information about the workforce and the local economy. The local workforce system benefits from a strong working relationship with WWU's Center for Economic and Business Research (CEBR), part of the College of Business and Economics. The CEBR director sits on the board of the Council. The Center assists by providing a focus for economic and business research activities for the university and for the region's workforce and economic development partners through the provision of:

- Econometric model building and dissemination of regional forecasts.
- Economic database management for local, state, regional, and national economic activity.
- Continued study of business cycles and fiscal issues in Washington State and British Columbia.

In addition, staff at the CEBR conduct regular cost of living and other surveys, work with a variety of business organizations, and communicate regularly with elected officials, non-governmental organizations, and business leaders in the region.

Secondary Vocational Programs

Each of the twenty school districts in the Northwest region (19 K-12 districts and Lummi nation Schools) provides vocational education programs which prepare young adults for entry into post-secondary education, training and the workforce. All have articulation agreements with the area's two-year colleges; Skagit Valley, Whatcom and Bellingham Technical, that offer dual credit programs designed to integrate high school and college vocational programs. The programs of study allow students the opportunity to earn college credits, certificate or a two-year college degree based on competencies attained while in high school. These vocational technical programs develop skills needed to work in a technologically oriented society by emphasizing math, science and communication and provide training to achieve entry into a specific profession or career cluster. The Council works with school districts to implement, expand and saturate work-based learning opportunities that complement the vocational-technical training and articulated programs of study which exist with the local colleges. Work based learning provides student the opportunity to explore occupations or industries to guide course selection, reinforce classroom learning, and create relevance for required courses.

The Northwest Career and Technical Academy

The Northwest Career and Technical Academy is recognized for its unique and specialized educational programs. The Northwest Career & Technical Academy serves juniors and seniors referred from the region's high schools. The Northwest Career and Technical Academy serves as an extension campus for area high schools and offers programs at four campuses, Mount Vernon, Anacortes, Sedro Woolley and Whatcom. The Academy offers a variety of courses, licenses, and certifications:

- Aerospace Manufacturing
- Animal Care and Handling
- Applied Medical Sciences (Nursing Assistant Program)
- Automotive Services
- Construction
- Criminal Justice Law Enforcement

- Culinary Arts
- Dental Assisting
- Video Game Development
- Marine Services
- Mobile, Client Server Administration
- Fire Science and EMS
- Veterinary Assistant
- Welding

These programs provide the skills, knowledge, and professional leadership training necessary for the workplace or continuing education through an apprenticeship, community college, or university. Students will also be offered a jump-start through participation in internships, job shadows, field studies, clinical and other real-world experiences as well as college articulated credits, industry certifications and licenses. Program certifications and licenses received by students represent valuable employment skills because they meet industry standards and increase potential earning power and post-secondary training/educational placement.

Private Career Training Programs

The region has a number of proprietary training schools and programs. The Council provides direction to the proper resources for those wishing to be listed on the state's preferred training provider list. Those that are on the preferred provider list are included as options for participants seeking vocational training through WIOA funding. Commercial driving schools, for example, provide an important resource for an in-demand occupation as local community and technical colleges no longer provide this training. Specialized industry-focused training is also offered by Impact Washington as well as a plethora of smaller organizations and providers.

Employer Sponsored Training

The workforce system often partners with employers to leverage funding or other resources for worker training. The highly successful training program of Hexcel Burlington is one example of a collaborative effort of the employer and workforce system partners to expand this business, its workforce, and sustainable competency building systems. In response to skill shortages in the construction sector, both Barron Heating & Air Conditioning and Andgar have initiated internal training schools.

One-Stop Career Centers (WorkSource)

The Council has long held the belief that an integrated system of programs and services is the most cost efficient and customer valued approach to achieving high performance standards for partners and the respect and satisfaction of both business and job seeking customers. One strategy for achieving integration of services is the availability of Career Centers, which serve as the community focal point for access to the local employment and training system. These career centers are known as WorkSource Centers in Washington State. The U.S. Department of Labor has more recently required the identifier, American Job Center, to be part of the federal one-stop career center system.

The Council and the region's program partners have established three (3) Career Centers within the Northwest Workforce Development Area. These centers are located in Bellingham (serving Whatcom County), Oak Harbor (serving Island County), and Mount Vernon (serving Skagit

County). San Juan County is served by a Career Center dedicated to providing preparation services to the community and staffed by the NWC, this center, however, is not identified as a WorkSource Center. Each center offers universal access to basic career services, houses required programs and service providers, and provides access to those services and programs customers may need. All Career Centers, as well as Affiliated and Connection sites, are required to be certified by the local Council before using the WorkSource brand identity.

Career Centers add value to workforce system building by providing a focal point for the change process. The development of a co-located center focuses attention on many of the larger systemic pieces, which need to be integrated if the system itself is to be viewed by consumers as truly seamless. Additionally, experience in established centers shows all different types of job seeking customers are more satisfied with the information and services they receive in one place. Research also shows career centers, once operational for a period of time, assist programs in meeting and exceeding their individual program goals.

Programs Funded Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Title IB

These programs include services for adults, eligible young adults (youth) who experience a barrier as defined in WIOA, and dislocated workers. They are delivered through the WorkSource system with staff located within the Northwest's one-stop career centers and the San Juan Career Center. NWC has established a priority of services for all populations that recognizes Veterans preference and the needs of low-income populations. Title IB participants access multiple programs offering basic career services, individualized career services, follow-up, and/or training services.

Outreach

Active outreach, recruitment, and enrollment of young adults, adults, and dislocated workers are also conducted at appropriate sites in the community and through appropriate communication channels for the targeted population. With plant closures and substantial layoffs, rapid response services delivered on site at the business include intake activities and workshops for dislocated workers. (See Targeted Outreach for detail.)

Individualized Career Services and Career Pathway Plans

WIOA shapes both the scope of services and the service environments for job seekers. Staff is charged with providing intentional planning that extends beyond the job seekers' participation in program services by assisting in the development of career pathways. Within the plan, individualized career services include comprehensive assessment, career guidance and case management, customized job search, basic education, work-readiness skills (e.g. work experience) pre-employment classes and services, and supportive services.

Comprehensive Assessment

Comprehensive assessment is effective with all populations and involves a staff facilitated and ongoing discovery process involving active engagement by the participant as skills, interest, capabilities, labor market information (e.g. demand occupations, wages, outlook). Challenges are identified and then addressed in plans. For young adults, objective assessment includes an assessment of need for any of the fourteen program elements. Then the appropriate method to receive the program element is included in

their individual service strategy. Staff use formal assessments such as CASAS, Holland SDS, O*Net Skill Assessment, and Career Bridge.

Training Services and Credentials

A new emphasis is placed on obtaining credentials within a career pathway, specifically stackable credentials where the resulting investment of public funds equates to progressively higher wages as the person moves along a career pathway.

A substantial amount of training services occur in the natural environment of business and industry, where participants learn skills and can demonstrate competencies. Work based training, as one would expect, engages employer input thus strengthening programming. Work based training services include job shadows, internships, on the job training, pre-apprenticeship/apprenticeships, customized and incumbent worker training, entrepreneurial, and job readiness training.

Training may be provided only after a participant has conducted career planning activities, has had a complete analysis of assessment information, and has a demonstrated need for training. There must be a reasonable expectation that the result will lead to a job within a career pathway that leads to self-sufficiency.

Individual Training Accounts (ITA) are reserved for job driven occupations in the Northwest Areas' industry sectors, and occupations supporting the industry sector. An example of a training program that supports the industry sector is commercial driver license training (CDL). The Northwest area experiences a shortage of CDL drivers, an occupation that supports both manufacturing and construction.

Prior to establishing an ITA, the participant and Coordinator have navigated and leveraged all other available resources and a determination is made that the individual is unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources to pay the costs of training such as Pell, TAA, or State funds, or that the individual requires assistance beyond that which is available from other sources to pay training costs. Individual Training Accounts must be established with eligible training providers after a participant completes an extensive scholarship application process. The scholarship application process begins the individual's developmental portfolio. It requires that the individual plan for success in school and the career pathway as demonstrated by completing an extensive assessment process, researching both the training program and labor market, addressing barriers that may prevent program completion, and providing job readiness documentation such as a current resume and letters of recommendation.

Incumbent Worker Training

The Council recognizes that there is increasing need to train and retrain current workers to keep pace with the accelerating pace of technological advances, process refinements, and other changes driven by the pressures of globalization. Giving workers the contemporary skills required to meet the needs of a particular employer or set of employers, enables those businesses to become or remain competitive. This type of

raining is often delivered at the worksite and uses a variety of formats including continuing education and customized employer-based training that leverages local college and other expertise. The Council actively pursues incumbent worker training funds as well as Title IB funding targeted for the region's key industry sectors and focuses on providing the training workers need to increase their skills and earnings as they become qualified to fill current workforce gaps in health and allied services as well as construction and aerospace, marine, and other advanced manufacturing.

Programs Funded Under the Wagner-Peyser Act

Employment Security partners with the Council to connect employers and job seekers. The Employment Security Department (ESD) operates the public labor exchange within the Northwest WorkSource career centers by providing no-fee, employment resources and staff-assisted services to employers and job seekers authorized under the WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Act. The mission of ESD is: The Right Job For Each Person, Every Time. Key components include working with job seekers to improve their job search skills, tools, and methods. In addition, use labor market information and employer input to encourage in-demand/skills gap training for job seekers in need of up- skilling. Activities include the provision of core services, such as: assisting job seekers in finding employment, assisting employers in filling jobs; and facilitating the match between qualified jobseekers and employers. Wagner-Peyser supported labor exchange services serve as a cornerstone of the WorkSource system.

Veterans, unemployment insurance claimants, individuals with disabilities, migrant and seasonal farm workers, dislocated workers and others facing barriers to employment may receive intensive, staff-assisted services to gain suitable employment, e.g.: through various ESD-managed WorkSource programs, or through WorkSource partner programs, if eligible. In addition, businesses and job seekers are encouraged to explore job listings and employment and training information resources on WorkSourceWA.com.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) provides a full range of vocational services to enable individuals with disabilities to obtain and keep employment. Included in its services are vocational assessments for interest and abilities, labor market information, job search assistance, assistance with physical and mental restoration services, vocational training, and substantial counseling and guidance. Vocational Rehabilitation staff are collocated in the WorkSource Whatcom Career Center. DVR staff provide a leadership role and technical assistance in designing and implementing systems, practices, and training which allow all partners to better serve persons with disabilities.

Department of Services for the Blind

Washington State Department of Services for the Blind (DSB) provides training, counseling, and support to help Washington residents of all ages, who are blind or visually impaired, pursue employment, education, and independent living. Individuals can access these services via an interactive LiveChat application available through all computers available for public use in the three WorkSource centers located in the Northwest.

WorkFirst Programs

There are a variety of programs in the area for low-income individuals on Temporary Assistance

to Needy Families (TANF). These programs work to increase WorkFirst parents' access to job search, training programs - including basic skills, job retention, and wage progression assistance for those receiving public assistance. WorkSource provides employment services to WorkFirst participants as part of ESD's local WorkFirst contract requirements.

Basic Food Employment and Training

The Basic Food Employment and Training (BFET) program is an important part of Washington State's comprehensive workforce development system serving the needs of low-income individuals, displaced workers, and employers. The BFET program assists Basic Food recipients in obtaining livable wage employment and achieving self-sufficiency. The program offers job-search training, education, and workfare activities to improve BFET participant's employment prospects and wage-earning potential.

BFET provides intensive case management with the goal for its participants to obtain employment. BFET can also provide supportive services for transportation, childcare, car repairs, clothing, and rent and utility costs. In addition, BFET has limited funds for tuition, tools, licenses/certifications, and textbooks. Washington State's BFET program is voluntary; there are no mandatory participation requirements. BFET resources available through the community and technical colleges in this region are coordinated with WIOA IB programs to maximize resources and eliminate duplication in serving the community.

Mature Worker Services

The full range of services to older workers (55+ years old) is delivered through WorkSource Northwest career centers with staff located within the centers. Active outreach, recruitment, and enrollment of mature workers is conducted through WorkSource's Career Course. There, mature workers access multiple programs offering basic career services, intensive career services, follow-up services, and training services.

Center staff also refer mature workers to the Senior Community Service Employment Program provided through the AARP Foundation in this four-county region, with funding provided through the Older Americans Act.

Digital Literacy

Since 2005 the Council has provided career services in the region's WorkSource Centers to aid workers in building the computing skills necessary for success in today's workplace. Launched with a small pilot grant from Microsoft, the Council has evolved the Northwest Computer Literacy Instruction Corps (CLIC) program, a highly functional platform of volunteer computer tutors supervised by Council staff. These courses are for individuals who need basic introduction in the use of technology and are unable to navigate WorkSource resources without specialized training. The introductory training matriculates well with more advanced courses offered by community and technical colleges.

Key Industry Sector Tables

The Council and regional partners continue efforts to align training and service delivery with high-demand occupations and skill clusters in health and allied services, and in marine and other advanced manufacturing. Industry engagements often include broad participation from industry leadership, organized labor, educators, and workforce and economic development leadership. In

support of this sector focus WIOA training funds are targeted to identified sectors and occupations. The Council pursues additional funding sources and leverages with other agencies to further its strategies in support of the region's key industry sectors. Industry tables examine workforce needs and create actionable plans to meet those needs. The Council has achieved success with numerous industry-led, sector-specific initiatives, and benefits from its strategically pursued key sector representation on its board.

Worker Retraining

The Worker Retraining program assists dislocated workers in researching new career opportunities that will lead to sustainable employment. Individuals receiving unemployment receive assistance with career advising, local labor market research, Training Benefits and Commissioner Approved Training applications, tuition and book support, wrap around services and job search upon completion of training. To ensure students receive all necessary supports, a cross referral system between WorkSource partners and college Worker Retraining coordinators is utilized to strengthen student success. As an example, students preparing for job search upon graduation often utilize many of the services within the WorkSource centers and can benefit from cooperative case management between the colleges and WIOA programs. While in training, students may receive multi-layered services for accessibility and resources to assist individuals with a disability. As an example, students are often connected with college Accessibility Resource Coordinators as well as additional supports from the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation.

The Worker Retraining program further serves incumbent workers, supporting upskilling of individuals who require training to remain employed. This program has the built-in flexibility to work either with individuals on a personal level or with businesses that require a cohort of workers to be trained with specialized skills in order to remain employed. The colleges remain experts in curriculum development aligned to the local workforce needs, including incumbent worker training and worker retraining.

Training Benefits Program

The Training Benefits program offers additional weeks of unemployment benefits so eligible claimants can train for careers in a high-demand field. Claimants are oriented to this program during orientations offered at WorkSource and in Rapid Response. Information on training benefits is also available online and is described in Unemployment Claim Kits available online to those opening an initial claim. WorkSource partners at Whatcom Community, Bellingham Technical, and Skagit Valley Colleges offer approved programs which meet Training Benefit standards.

The State Job Skills Program

Washington's Job Skills Program (JSP), administered by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, is training customized to meet employers' specific needs. A central focus of JSP is to provide training and employment for those at risk of losing their jobs due to technological or economic changes. Training is delivered to new or current employees at the worksite or in a classroom.

JSP training is a tool for enhancing the growth of Washington's economy and increasing employment opportunities. JSP provides funding for training in regions with high unemployment rates and high levels of poverty. It also supports areas with new and growing industries, locations

where the local population does not have the skills needed to stay employed, and those regions impacted by economic changes that cause large-scale job loss.

The Northwest's community and technical colleges have implemented successful JSP training and are practiced at developing successful programs to meet local employers' need for new or current employee skill development.

OIC of Washington

The WIOA 167 National Farmworker Jobs Program provider is an active partner of the local workforce system and employs a multiple pathway strategy in the delivery of training services to migrant and seasonal farm workers. To maximize resources, OIC's 167 NFJP coordinates and, where possible, co-enrolls participants with local WIOA IB and other training programs. OIC of Washington has developed a strong working relationship with the WorkSource Skagit Career Center, thereby supporting a fully-integrated and seamless system functionally organized around service delivery. They plan to provide a technology platform to allow direct access to program services and resources, enhancing the partnership.

Staff are trained to utilize the statewide management information system and participate in joint activities and events such as job fairs, Agriculture Job Fairs, employer hiring events, system orientations, outreach, recruitment, and collaboration with Wagner-Peyser MSFW Outreach Workers.

Cascades Job Corps Center

Cascades Job Corps is a residential career technical training and education program funded by the US Department of Labor. The program helps eligible young people ages 16 through 24 complete their high school education, earn college credits, train for meaningful careers, and connect with employment, apprenticeship, military, or higher education opportunities. Job Corps centers provide on-campus housing, nutritious meal options, basic medical care, uniforms and class supplies, and recreation facilities and activities. Cascades Job Corps offers a non-residential option for students who wish to attend Cascades but live off Center. To qualify to attend Job Corps, applicants must be 16 through 24 years of age, have a low income, and have educational and employment barriers or deficits.

As of January 2020, Cascades Job Corps currently offers trades in the fields of Information Technology, Healthcare, Security and Protective Services, Office Administration, and Culinary Arts. Within trade, students pursue industry recognized certifications and licenses that teach them valuable employment skills. Additionally, students are taught soft skills, leadership skills, and general life skills. Students who attend Cascades Job Corps have two years to complete the program with the option to apply for a third year to pursue advanced training within their trade or at a local college. Cascades Job Corps partners with the Sedro-Woolley School District and has a high school located on Center, students who enroll without their high school diploma have the option to dual enroll in high school while simultaneously working on their trade. Some students may elect to pursue their GED, which can be completed on Center at no cost to the student. Students who complete the Job Corps program receive Career Transition Services, assistance in career placement, and a Transition Allowance.

In 2015, Cascades Job Corps was selected by the US Department of Labor to trial a Demonstration Pilot Program. Students were dual enrolled in Cascades Job Corps and Skagit Valley College

throughout the duration of the Pilot. Enrollment for the Demonstration Pilot ended in July 2019, but will continue for those currently enrolled until June 2022.

Literacy Programs

A variety of non-profit and community-based organizations provide literacy services throughout the region. Adult Basic Education (ABE) and Family Literacy Services in the region are provided by Bellingham Technical, Whatcom Community, and Skagit Valley Colleges, Community Action Skagit County, and Northwest Indian College under Title II of WIOA. Goodwill Industries also offers ABE and GED services. Also, some WIOA programs, such as financial literacy, are offered through classes at WorkSource career centers.

Youth re-engagement programs, such as Bellingham Technical College's IMPACT! program, provide low-income and first-generation students an opportunity to complete HS diplomas or the GED, while exploring high wage and high demand career options, as well as developing educational, life and financial plans. Whatcom Community College and Skagit Valley College also offer re-engagement programs such as High School 21+ to support out-of-school youth and adults 21 and older in completing basic skills towards earning a high school diploma, with options for also earning college credit. Additional programming at Skagit Valley College includes Open Doors (a competency-based high school completion program for eligible students 17-20 years), INVEST (a post-secondary transition program for individuals enrolled in high schools until age 21 with intellectual disabilities), and English Language Acquisition (instruction in speaking, listening, reading, and writing in English to prepare for college and employment).

Non-Required Partners

Workforce Development Area 3 has numerous agencies providing support to high-barrier individuals listed in Section III of this plan. The region includes Opportunity Council, Working Connections Childcare (WCC) and Goodwill Training & Education within its operating framework to maximize efficiencies while delivering high quality support. By including non- required partners, the Council is able to better leverage resources and align services to those most in need. The most underserved and vulnerable in the workforce benefit from the practical assistance of subsidized childcare and the case management of these organizations. Childcare availability and cost are primary barriers to customer success, particularly those with low income. By including providers, Working Connections Childcare and Goodwill Training & Education partners as active stakeholders, the wraparound services are enriched and informed around current trends and resources for the most marginalized customers.

As part of the employer support, these non-required partners can guide and advise strategic use of the available workforce including hiring practices, staff and supervisor training models, and information-sharing around childcare subsidies. Ongoing relationships such as these provide information sharing to guide employers in hiring practices, upskilling vulnerable employees and creating successful employment of the high-barrier workforce.

TARGETED OUTREACH

Washington's workforce development system is an integrated network of services, programs and investments with a shared goal of improving the skills of the state workforce. The sum of all targeted outreach from partners within the system translates to a powerful and substantial resource base that, when coordinated effectively, the resulting effort is scalable regardless of individual program resource. As each stakeholder in this system provides services to the array of people who experience barriers, access is no longer a term reserved for individuals with disabilities. To that end, NWC has increased the scope of work for the long-standing Regional Accessibility Team and expanded membership to ensure access for all. The uRegional Access Advisory Committee, chaired by a member of the Workforce Development Council board, works to:

- Create a forum for sharing best practices and improving accessibility throughout the system for populations with a wide variety of barriers, including: economic, physical, mental, and behavioral health
- Be an integral part of the region's partnership team structure
- Develop barrier solutions to accessibility of the system
- Include membership of interested stakeholders and subject matter experts

Success for outreach is, in part, how well the system does shifting direction from individual programs outreach to targeted outreach where individuals with barriers are engaged in the system (not just siloed program services), where all partner programs achieve or exceed targeted outcomes, and under the overarching principle that business and industry are gaining access to the entire talent pool in our communities.

The depth and breadth of service provider knowledge of the system, its services, and programs will be essential to meet targeted outreach goals.

A systemic approach to customer outreach with emphasis of increasing access to remote areas is incorporated in the WorkSource process improvement plan that resulted from the Center Certification process. The Northwest Workforce system has a 'no wrong door' philosophy for serving business and job seeking customers. When conducting outreach, the goal is that all staff, regardless of their agency or program affiliation will present an array of available services from the system and staff will assist in service connections.

Resources and emphasis are placed on marketing and outreach that has extended reach and resonates with the WIOA targeted populations. Examples of this include:

- Radio advertisements and radio programming;
- Marketing on the transit buses, their travel extending to all areas within the geographic region;
- Advertising WorkSource system services in Craigslist and other news media;
- Attending community forums, meetings, and job fairs where staff represents the services and programs of the entire system;
- Outreach flyers for the system's services and programs are posted at laundromats, food banks, and low-income housing;
- Mobile services and connection points in rural areas;
- Presentations to specific groups such as: Northwest Youth Services' Ground Floor for

- homeless young adults; American Legion Auxiliary for unemployed Veterans; Community Resource Network in Whatcom and Skagit for multiple target populations and more
- Integrating system services within established community programming; for example, conducting young adult workshops in the diversion program for justice-involved youth with Community Links.

Outreach Efforts by Population Served

Displaced Homemakers

- Worker retraining coordinators at the community and technical colleges provide outreach, referrals, and services to this population.
- For more than 20 years, Turning Point, at Whatcom Community College, has been helping participants identify their skills and strengths, set goals, and find their next steps along a career path, particularly for displaced homemakers and those over the age of 55. WorkSource Northwest now offers a similar program free of charge titled, Strategies for Success.
- WIOA staff developed targeted marketing materials designed for those individuals who are displaced due to their military spouse's assignment. They engage and obtain referrals from staff at Fleet and Family Services at the Whidbey Naval Air Station.
- All displaced spouses are invited to attend Rapid Response events throughout the region and to participate in services that are available.

Low-Income Individuals

- Each of the resource room computers has a Washington Connection link icon saved on the desktop. Job seekers who may qualify for SNAP and, by extension, BFET, are referred to this vital community resource.
- Low-income adults who receive federally-funded Basic Food (SNAP) and are at least 16 years old can receive Basic Food Employment & Training (BFET) services. ESD is a BFET provider in Island, Skagit, and Whatcom counties. Through a partnership with the local Community Services Offices, potential participants for BFET are identified and receive an invitation to an Orientation to BFET services. In addition, a DSHS representative is on site once a week in Whatcom and Skagit centers to determine financial eligibility for food benefits and cash programs as well as offer guidance on accessing other programs through DSHS. In addition to ESD, other BFET providers include: Bellingham Technical College; Community Action of Skagit County; Northwest Indian College; Opportunity Council; Skagit Valley College; Whatcom Community College.
- NWC has a strong and long relationship with the local community action agencies (Opportunity Council and Community Action of Skagit County) that provide referrals.
- WorkSource staff participate in local coalition meetings of social service agencies and present information about the system's programs and services.
- WorkSource staff regularly updates DSHS Public Benefit Specialists about program

opportunities. These Public Benefit Specialists refer individuals who are working and applying for SNAP to engagement/orientation sessions.

- Colleges serve low-income adults through multiple programs including federal financial aid, Basic Food Employment & Training, Opportunity Grant, and WorkFirst.

Individuals with Disabilities

- The colleges use in-house and community resources to ensure that individuals with disabilities are provided with the supports they need to be successful. This effort includes working with college Accessibility Resources specialists, DVOP counselors at the WorkSource centers, Vocational Rehabilitation counselors at DVR, Department of Services for the Blind, and local community action agencies. Referrals and co-enrollments are a constant activity to ensure that job seekers receive the help they need to succeed. Colleges market their training services on the transit busses, extending their reach to all populations, including people with disabilities.
- DVR demonstrates collaboration and service delivery integration to assure that job seekers with disabilities receive quality customer service within the WorkSource system and works jointly with employers to maximize the employment outcomes for job seekers with disabilities.
- DVR provides targeted outreach to the disability community through local community partnerships and liaisons with medical providers, mental health agencies, other government agencies, high school special education programs, and post-secondary institutions. Referrals and co-enrollments are a constant activity to ensure that job seekers receive the necessary supports to succeed.
- ESD currently funds veteran employment specialists whose sole focus is to help military veterans with disabilities and other severe employment barriers. Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) staff assist veterans in assessing their skills and interests, identifying potentially appropriate training programs, and work with the veteran to create an employment plan that meets their individual needs.

Older Individuals

- AARP Foundation provides the Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP) in the Northwest and recruits through WorkSource. The program serves job-seekers over the age of 55 who are low income to obtain a paid work experience with in-depth job searching.
- The local technical and community colleges are open enrollment institutions and serve a diverse population including older workers seeking retraining into high wage/high demand occupations.
- WorkSource marketing materials include images of mature workers, drawing the job-seeker's attention to the environment that is inclusive and attentive to unique needs.

Ex-Offenders

- Staff participate in and collaborate with re-entry programs such as the Re-entry

Coalition. Staff coordinate with juvenile probation officers regarding services and supports.

- WorkSource staff present workshops to attendees of Community Links (a diversion program) to young adults and their guardians in lieu of jail time or getting a charge on their records. They collaborate with Community Links to provide additional services.
- WorkSource staff perform active recruitment and outreach to Whatcom County Sheriff's Office Jail Work Center, Skagit Justice Center and Island County Jail, as well as with local work release programs and Community Corrections Officers.
- WorkSource staff present an overview of WorkSource Services to the Juvenile Detention School to reach those still incarcerated.
- WorkSource staff present the Fresh Start workshop at the three WorkSource centers and at Northwest Indian College.
- Marketing materials for the Fresh Start Workshop are promoted throughout the community and on radio programs. Referrals and co-enrollments occur as appropriate.

Homeless Individuals

- NWC has collaborated on a research and demonstration project with homeless housing providers and DSHS. Through these partnerships, outreach to other homeless populations has increased. The collaboration is sustained to target individuals experiencing homelessness and partners attend Project Homeless Connect every year to both conduct outreach and provide services.
- WorkSource staff conduct outreach to the agencies that provide homeless housing services such as Ryan's House in Island and Northwest Youth Services in Whatcom and Skagit counties. As well as Opportunity Council and the Lighthouse Mission in Bellingham.
- Outreach to Homeless Support Program Coordinators in the secondary schools.

Foster Care

- Young Adult program staff routinely provide outreach to K-12 and with the Department of Children Youth and Families staff. Community and technical college programs (such as Passport to College) target foster youth.
- Direct outreach to YouthNet, Treehouse, and BlueSkies for children.

At-Risk Youth

- The colleges serve at-risk youth through a number of youth re-engagement and training programs to help identify career pathways and attain stackable certificates leading to employment. Three such examples are the Project IMPACT! Program, Open Doors, and HS21+. Additionally, the colleges provide pre-apprenticeship programs that build foundational and technical skills needed to successfully enter the trades.

- Active recruitment and outreach include: Northwest Youth Services, WA State Department of Children, Youth & Families, Juvenile Probation and Court, Secret Harbor, GRADS-Teen Parent Program, Oasis Teen Shelter, Teen Clinics in Mount Vernon, DVSAS, Youth Dynamics, National Association for Education of Homeless Children & Youth, Catholic Community Charities, and more.
- WorkSource will continue to grow the partnership with DSHS to serve SNAP recipients who are young adults.

Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers

- WorkSource has a number of bilingual Spanish-speaking staff, Job Seeker materials have been translated into Spanish.
- MSFW Outreach Program staff provide year-round services which intensify during the peak agricultural periods. This group regularly communicates with MSFW customers, local agricultural employers, and other local organizations that have similar mission to provide direct and support services to this population. For those workers looking to upgrade skills within the industry, programs such as Wagner-Peyser, WIOA Section 167, and WIOA I-B Adult and Dislocated Worker will coordinate and leverage resources. One MSFW outreach staff person provides outreach efforts to MSFW's in Skagit and Whatcom counties. The methods used to accomplish this include: Promote and encourage MSFWs to take advantage of local WorkSource services via weekly broadcasts on KSVR 91.7 FM radio station; attend community forums with local partners/MSFWs to discuss/network topics such as housing, jobs, healthcare, education, and food drives, etc.; On a weekly basis, continue outreach efforts in laundromats, church groups, farms, taco trucks, and other areas in which MSFWs visit, socialize, and congregate to promote WorkSource services; Attend SeaMar Migrant Health/Resource Fairs in Whatcom and Skagit during the harvest season; Initiate Job-Ag/Resource Fairs for local farmworkers; Network with Ag employers in Skagit and Whatcom counties; Visit with MSFW at their job sites and provide information; Attend resource fairs initiated by local community agencies who offer services to MSFWs; Visit farm worker apartment complexes and conduct door-to-door distribution of flyers advertising WorkSource services.

Individuals within Two Years of or Exhausted TANF

- WorkSource communicates regularly with TANF case managers for both at-risk youth and those who will soon exhaust benefits. When appropriate, individuals are referred to other system programs.
- In partnership with DSHS, case managers discuss work activity options with WorkFirst participants based on what they need to do to prepare to go to work. A Comprehensive Evaluation (CE) is conducted by the DSHS case manager to determine the participant's work readiness. Participants that meet the work ready criteria may be referred to ESD Career Scope. ESD participates in the LPA and Local Resource Coalition where information is widely shared between partners on services available through the WorkFirst Program at local WorkSource centers.

- Referrals and co-enrollments are a constant activity to ensure that job seekers receive the supports they need to succeed.

Unemployed and Long-Term Unemployed

- Hundreds of unemployment insurance claimants are invited to WorkSource every month. The goal is to engage them early in the UI benefit process and assist them in accessing WorkSource services. UI claimants are introduced to a wide menu of services available through the WorkSource system. The initial Deskside 1:1 orientation provides an overview of resources and services and each UI claimant receives a comprehensive review of current job search techniques and career pursuits, labor market information, resume review and advice, referrals to additional services and programs as appropriate, and an individual plan of action.
- Regular email notifications are sent to inform job seekers of upcoming job fairs and/or hiring events and job leads.
- UI claimants receive follow up calls at four weeks post RESEA Orientation and, in some cases, an additional call at eight weeks post RESEA Orientation. The purpose of the follow up call is to ensure claimants are following their Individual Action Plan and identify challenges encountered while looking for employment.
- The college's role in assisting UI claimants includes helping prospective students identify high wage/high demand career opportunities, guided by local labor market research and providing funding to students eligible for Worker Retraining to attain the skills necessary for employment.
- The Worker Retraining programs led by each college assist dislocated workers in researching new career opportunities that will lead to sustainable employment within the regional landscape. Individuals who are receiving unemployment receive one-on-one assistance with career advising, local labor market research, Training Benefits and Commissioner Approved Training applications, tuition and book support, wrap-around services and job search upon completion of training. To ensure that students receive all necessary supports, the colleges utilize a cross referral system between WorkSource partners and Worker Retraining coordinators to strengthen the success of those engaged in both systems. As an example, students preparing for job search upon graduation often use many of the services within the WorkSource centers and can benefit from cooperative case management between the colleges and WIOA programs.
- While in training, students may receive multi-layered services for accessibility and resources to assist individuals with a disability. As an example, students are often connected with college Accessibility Resource Coordinators as well as additional supports from the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation.
- The Worker Retraining (WRT) program also serves the formerly self-employed, veterans, displaced homemakers, and incumbent workers. WRT supports the upskilling of workers who require training to remain employed. This program has the built-in flexibility to work either with individuals on a personal level or with businesses that require a cohort of workers to be trained with specialized skills in

order to remain employed. The colleges offer expertise in curriculum development aligned to local workforce needs, including incumbent worker training and worker retraining.

Veteran Special Initiatives

- The following organization perform ongoing outreach to veterans: Lighthouse Mission; Opportunity Council (Whatcom/Skagit/Island Counties); Local Colleges and Universities (through their Veterans' Service Offices); Lummi Nation; Sunrise Services (Island/Whatcom); Unity Care Northwest.
- The colleges help veteran students engage with multiple on-site and community resources to guide and strengthen success in securing local employment. As an example, when veterans meet with college VA navigators, they are directed to additional resources as appropriate, including Worker Retraining funding and support, Unemployment processes, DVOP counselor services at the WorkSource center and community supports such as housing and disability.

Dislocated Workers

- In coordination with Rapid Response planning, the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) program helps dislocated workers become re-employed after losing their jobs due to impacts of international trade. Certified workers may receive help looking for and relocating to a new job, as well as training for a new occupation. Once a petition is approved, both the state TAA unit and local TAA staff coordinate outreach activities to identified workers, inviting them to participate in TAA Orientations outlining the benefits available through the TAA program.
- The colleges have developed several outreach strategies to engage dislocate workers. Examples include the Life Transitions program at Skagit Valley and Whatcom Community Colleges and participation on the region's Rapid Response team.

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE INVESTMENT COORDINATION

The Council utilizes multiple mechanisms and strategies in continuing its successful history of coordination of education and workforce investment activities with secondary and postsecondary partners throughout the region. Through its board structure and partnership tables, including the Northwest Workforce Partner Management Team, Regional Access Advisory Committee, industry partner tables, and other venues, the Council will continue to promote and support coordinated and co-funded activities that enhance services, which may include co-enrollment in core programs when appropriate, with each partner providing services that add value and avoid duplication.

CAREER PATHWAYS

NWC invests in the development of career pathways through a combination of high-quality education, training, hands-on learning, and other services that provide the skills that local industries need, including the preparation of enrolled individuals to be successful in secondary or post-secondary education options, including pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships, as well as career guidance to support individuals in achieving education and career goals. As appropriate, education is offered concurrently with workforce preparation activities and training. Individualized service strategies organize education, training, work readiness, and other services to meet the particular needs of an individual in a manner that accelerates their educational and career advancement, and helps them enter or advance within a specific occupation or occupational cluster.

The Northwest partnership will continue to facilitate career pathway development through regular review by industry and career programs, with input from industry partners, to identify needs and potential building blocks of career pathways. As part of this process, local area high schools and colleges will collaborate on ways to identify and introduce educational components for program development, alignment, and dual enrollment (e.g. Career and Technical Education with dual credit, College in the High School, Career & Technical Academies, Running Start, cybersecurity camps for high schoolers) to facilitate streamlined progression by students that maximizes their time, credits, and tuition dollars.

Prior learning assessment is employed by the colleges for veterans, returning adult workers, or those with previous training or education to help them avoid paying for and repeating content they have already adequately mastered.

The partnership tables will continue to develop improved customer access to career pathways that include, wherever possible, the full continuum of customer needs, including English language learning, adult basic education, high school credentials, certificate and degree options, work based learning opportunities and articulation from high school to postsecondary education and beyond.

The approximately 552,000 Washington adults without a high school credential are a largely untapped sector of the labor market. This demographic combined with 16-18 year old young adults who have separated from the K-12 system require additional resources and supports to fulfill their potential as working contributors to the local labor market. The region's colleges provide a variety of high quality, accelerated Adult Basic Education options.

Bellingham Technical College, Whatcom Community College, and Skagit Valley College offer I-Best

programming, an accelerated model for college preparation. Bellingham Technical College, through Project Impact, and Skagit Valley College, through Open Doors, offer high school completion for eligible students 17-20 years of age. Skagit Valley College provides On-Ramp and College and Workforce Prep Academy programs to help transition English Language Learners and Adult Basic Education students more seamlessly into professional technical programs, and INVEST (a post-secondary transition program for individuals enrolled in high school until age 21 with intellectual disabilities.)

NWC facilitates the development of career pathways primarily through its Title IB program design in collaboration with multiple partners and stakeholders throughout the system. This is accomplished through the following:

- Preparatory activities that allow job seekers to be successful in post-secondary education and which includes assessment, career exploration, and planning. Job seekers receive prompt, differentiated support based on their individual needs. Plans will be based on assessment and will identify a career pathway.
- Career guidance and support to direct the customer towards the next step on the pathway and attainment of a micro-certificate or recognized post-secondary credential.
- Remediation of basic education and skills gaps.
- Career exploration through work experiences; job shadows; work site tours; and informational interviews.
- Hands-on training models such as a series of pre-apprenticeship opportunities offered in Skagit and Whatcom counties through coordinated efforts of NWC, registered apprenticeships, and the community and technical colleges. This training provides a combination of basic skill and occupational instruction that prepares workers for competitive entry within the advanced manufacturing and construction industries. Upon completion of training, job seekers obtain a selection of the following credentials: manufacturing basics; OSHA; flagging; forklift; blueprint reading; trades math; and LEAN principles. These exemplify ‘stackable credentials,’” upon which the individual can add additional credentials gained on the job, or through return for additional training to advance on their career path.

The Council and partners will supplement this coordinated planning with use of multiple data sources to identify and support existing training and continue development of effective new programs that lead to career pathways and industry recognized postsecondary credentials and employment opportunities in key sectors. Data sources include local and regional labor market analysis, feedback from key advisory board members and community partners, as well as graduation, employment placement and wage rate trends that are tracked by the colleges when possible.

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT AND BUSINESS-RESPONSIVE INITIATIVES

The Council's business and employer services strategy for the Northwest's workforce system is articulated in its [Regional Business Services Plan](#), which summarizes roles and responsibilities of system partners.

This foundation sets the framework to quickly and effectively adapt operations to provide a highly qualified workforce which meets the needs of our dynamic marketplace and fuels the economic growth of our region. This approach maximizes efficiencies and aids in establishing a comprehensive approach to business customers under the WorkSource brand; that provides a coordinated and responsive system of services to employers; that staff are knowledgeable of services and able to make appropriate referrals or connections if needed, and the WorkSource MIS system is used to record employer contacts and document services provided to businesses.

The Council's Vision for Business Services:

- To provide services on a universal basis and in a customer-focused, market-driven approach
- To enhance the workforce development system's capacity for responsiveness to a rapidly changing marketplace
- To promote a healthy business climate to attract and retain businesses and jobs

The main objectives of the Council's framework plan are to:

- Align separately funded workforce development programs to provide comprehensive solutions to business customers
- Focus, align, and improve the effectiveness of the region's business services delivery
- Increase the value of services available and business customers' satisfaction with those services
- Build collaborative opportunities with partners to achieve goals
- Create an effective single point of contact process
- Enhance business' use of WorkSource services to address their workforce needs

Guiding Principles

- Recognition of the business as a primary customer, stakeholder and investor.
- Alignment of service delivery strategy to respond to business customer demand.
- Prioritizing the delivery of select services to business most able to fuel regional economic and community growth, targeting sectors with high wage, high skill occupations.
- Deployment of a highly competent staff able to deliver quality products and services.
- A robust labor exchange system which provides job seekers access to jobs and business access to an available, skilled workforce.

Responsive Services

Regardless of the condition of the economy, the job market is determined by business demand. Business services are established to serve the demand side of the workforce talent equation by strengthening the relationship and the quality of interactions with employers, generating access to more and better jobs. Services which develop businesses contribute to the development of the workforce; services to develop the workforce contribute to the development of business.

A regional labor economist is available to analyze and disseminate timely and relevant labor market information through face-to-face meetings, written monthly updates, presentations to staff, employer groups, and by request. This translates to knowledge and strategy around the Northwest region's in-demand industry sectors. The regional labor economist is also available to provide information both in-house and to the public regarding the regional inventory of occupations and important related indicators such as prevailing wage statistics. By involving this data and analysis into the strategic process and with communication with staff, all members of the team are on the same page.

Economic development entities represent the lead organizations in working with business recruitment and retention in each of the Northwest counties. NWC maintains active working relationships with each, which take the form of participation on select committees and teams; two-way consultative relationships for business attraction, retention and growth; Rapid Response activities, including lay-off aversion; workforce analytics and labor market information; collaboration on strategic planning and key sector initiatives; community and service branding; and informal early warning systems to make each other aware of opportunities and threats.

The directors of Island County Economic Development Council (EDC) and Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County (EDASC) are seated on the NWC board. A representative of the Port of Bellingham, Whatcom County's designated Associate Development Organization, is an invitee and regularly attends NWC board meetings.

Examples of current activities include:

- Whatcom County has a standing meeting of practitioners involved in economic development activities, known as "Team Whatcom." NWC actively participates and is part of the "Choose Whatcom" project to grow and attract business to Whatcom County. NWC is highlighted as a resource for business on the project's [Choose Whatcom](#) website: [Recruiting Resources](#).
- Maintaining an active partnership with WWU's Small Business Development Center (SBDC) for business to business outreach promoting WorkSource Services, including On-the-Job and Incumbent Worker training.
- NWC is an active partner of the EDASC and supports EDASC's initiative to promote the Skagit County Maritime Cluster, one of NWC's key industry sectors, marine manufacturing. EDASC also performs business to business outreach promoting WorkSource Services, including On-the-Job and Incumbent Worker training.
- In San Juan County, NWC's Career Center in Friday Harbor adjoins the EDC offices and staff of each agency work closely together on business and workforce projects and presentations. Currently each organization participates on a county committee called "Island Friendly," whose goal is to improve overall customer service and build a San Juan Island brand.

Key Industry Initiatives

The Council's core business is to improve the ability of the workforce to meet the demands of business and industry. The local workforce development system provides an array of business services, with resource investment in targeted industry sectors. The Council strategically aligns

WIOA training investments and service delivery with high demand occupations and skill clusters in growth industries, while lending support to other regional business initiatives and service delivery infrastructure.

Industry Tables

Industry tables can take many forms but are often characterized as public-private partnerships of leadership from business, labor, workforce development, economic development and education. Industry tables work together to help clarify industry's needs, including workforce issues, and respond as a system to adapt or customize local approaches to provide workers with the skills required within industries vital to our regional economy. Through industry tables and other venues, the Council convenes leadership across jurisdictional boundaries to address workforce-related issues, while also participating in industry tables convened by other entities (ports, EDCs, colleges, etc.).

Closing Skill Gaps

As business and industry continue to evolve their workplaces, the skills of workers need also to continually evolve to ensure profit and productivity. Strategies to address skill gaps begin in the K-12 system with pipeline activities to attract young people to careers and industries with promising futures. The preparation of young people with the necessary academic and experiential backgrounds to succeed in these occupations can begin in K-12 or other appropriate non-school venues. Skill gap continues with engagement of key industry leadership to identify existing, emerging, and anticipated worker skill gaps. Influences on skill gaps can include anything from changes in technology, contracts, work methods, or even an aging workforce.

Business Services within the WorkSource One-Stop Career Centers

The Council oversees the operation of one-stop career centers (WorkSource) which serve as convenient access points to the workforce development system. The Council is responsible for developing and implementing policies and procedures that align partners' activities and resources into an integrated delivery system for high quality, customer-driven services.

Labor Exchange

Labor exchange is defined as: assisting employers in filling jobs; assisting job seekers in finding employment; and facilitating the match between the employer and job seeker. Coordination begins with customer (business/employer/job seeker) introduction to an automated labor exchange system, including such items as a centralized job listing system, WorkSource branded products, and a shared client history system.

Industry-Focused On-the-Job and Customized Training

Delivering skill-based, industry-valued training has become a focal point in workforce development. With knowledge and skill requirements changing at breakneck speed, employers, employees, educators and students alike struggle to stay abreast of escalating skill demands in the workplace. Through resource leveraging with public and private investments, the Council targets its WIOA and grant training resources to increase the number of workers in high demand occupations within targeted sectors.

- **Identification of specific industry trends and skill requirements:** Workplace trends and skill requirements are identified, and training organized to address emergent needs.

- **Setting high standards for education and training providers:** Only those training providers who produce results and meet high standards are approved by the Council as preferred providers.
- **Use of workforce and occupational skill standards:** The integration of Workforce Skill Standards and Foundation Skills into curricula and training throughout the Northwest system provides a common understanding of the skills, attributes, and characteristics generally required by employers. Occupational skill standards, professional competencies, and industry recognized certifications provide the system an opportunity to benchmark worker training against industry standards.

The WorkSource system solicits requests from business in targeted industries for training activities that can be offered to up-skill current workers and on-the-job training to bridge the gap created by a lack of available skilled workers.

Talent Pipeline Strategies

Increasing the size and quality of the available labor pool is critical to meeting the current and future workforce needs of business. This is accomplished through a myriad of strategies which include: career fairs, industry familiarization tours, career camps, youth employment, coordination with career connect programs, participation with industry on collegiate advisory committees, monitoring emerging legislation and regional or national initiatives, and other such strategies as may be funded and contemporary.

Job Retention

Workforce development and economic development have a mutual interest in saving and retaining jobs. Retention of existing jobs is as important as is the creation of new jobs to the local economy.

An informal early warning system brings the Northwest economic and workforce development communities together to reduce the number of jobs potentially being shed. As approximately 69% of the region's jobs are attributable to small business, providing support to this vital segment is essential to job retention.

Employment Security Department's Shared Work program is an excellent indicator of businesses whose jobs may be at risk. Companies in the program are approached and offered technical assistance from either the Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County or Western Washington University's Small Business Development Center. The free, confidential counseling offers a variety of services including financial analysis, access to capital, and competitive analysis. Those businesses receiving technical assistance experienced an average 10.5% increase in Sales Growth vs. 5.4% growth for all Washington business in 2014. Job creation for these businesses was 11.7% vs. 2.8% for Washington business in the same period.

The WIOA I-B programs provide follow-up services and job retention services including job counseling, assistance, resolving barriers, and referral to appropriate resources to former participants and to participants who were co-enrolled in other partner programs including Trade Act. Further supplemental skill training services can be provided to current employees through the IB Incumbent Worker Training program.

Hiring Events

Job fairs and hiring events provide excellent exposure to businesses with job openings and cast a wide net in attracting potential applicants. Hiring events and job fairs may include but are not limited to:

- Single employer on site
- General public events
- Target demographic events
- Target skill events
- Target industry sectors

Specialized job fairs may be scheduled on an as-needed basis to meet individual business needs (e.g. large recruitments, layoffs, etc.)

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Northwest Workforce Council's performance accountability system is consistent with the accountability provisions of WIOA the State and the Department of Labor's regulations and guidelines. The Council uses the information collected and reported through the statewide management information system and the data and post-program outcomes collected and reported by the State Workforce Board and the State's Employment Security Department on federal Common Measures and on State Core Performance Measures. The Council also applies the results of its continuous quality improvement methods, which include performance data, customer flow data, customer surveys, comment cards, and focus groups.

The purposes of the performance review and accountability system are to improve performance; provide quality and effective services to customers; and assist the Council in overseeing the one-stop (WorkSource) system programs, including WIOA Title I-B programs. The Council carries out its performance accountability responsibilities on a regular and timely basis through its Quality Assurance Committee. The Quality Assurance Committee receives and reviews local WIOA levels of performance on federal Common Measures and on state Core Performance measures. This committee is responsible for reviewing the performance information provided by the State Board, Employment Security Department, and that collected by the Council either through the statewide management information system or its continuous quality improvement processes, then incorporating the findings and conclusions of these efforts in its strategic planning.

Northwest Workforce Council reviewed the performance of WIOA Title I programs and the other workforce development programs throughout its strategic planning process to assist in determining strategic goals and strategies for the workforce development system. To improve performance, meet customer needs and develop a world class workforce, it has set goals and strategies that include skills standards, competency attainment, system integration, lifelong learning and a commitment to continuous quality improvement.

The Council believes its strategies will strengthen the services, increase outcome performance, and develop the necessary skill level needed by the worker and the employer in today's work environment. The Council will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies in relation to local labor market needs, demographics of the current and emerging workforce, the outcomes achieved by the participants, and customer feedback. The Council will, if necessary, revise its strategies if the labor market needs, performance or customer feedback determines change is necessary.

The Council recognizes the value and benefit of management indicators to track and predict performance. Working closely with its partners to track and report common measures across multiple federal workforce development programs: Employment Security Department, Job Corps, Adult Basic Education, and the Department of Social and Health Services Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. The Council's Quality Assurance Committee has continually refined its Northwest Workforce System Quarterly Performance Report to improve its usefulness as a performance oversight tool. The report includes measures of importance to the Council and the one-stop system which include: DOL federal common measure performance of programs operated by Northwest partner organizations, WIOA training investments, WIOA Title I fiscal summary, competitive workforce grants and awards by key sector, one-stop customer flow, business and job seeker satisfaction, unemployment, and other significant workforce system issues or

accomplishments of the quarter. The report provides timely insight into performance attainment and aids the Council in its oversight role to ensure the region's workforce system is responsive to the Council's strategic goals and that its programs meet performance goals.

The Council has developed a comprehensive tracking system for WIOA Title I performance for Young Adult, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. The Young Adult, Adult, and Dislocated Worker programs are designed to meet the Common Performance Measures with entry into - and sustainability in - employment, earnings, credential attainment and skill gain.

The Council, in its strategic planning capacity, reviews the performance of the other workforce development programs in the area which include Adult Basic Education, Post-Secondary Vocational Technical Education, Apprenticeships, Private Schools, and Secondary Vocational Education. Outcomes on state workforce core measures for these programs are reviewed annually. The Quality Assurance and Planning Committees review state workforce programs' local outcomes, and state/local level targets and outcomes to inform the development of the Council's strategic goals and objectives and specific investment strategies.

The Council is not directly responsible for the performance of local workforce development programs which are governed and administered by other agencies or organizations. The purposes of the performance review of these programs are to assure system alignment and integration goals are advancing, they include but are not limited to: improving outcomes for its customers, expanding existing coordination efforts, increasing services and resources to customers, and providing quality and current information to employers and job seekers.

Northwest workforce system staff work actively with post-secondary vocational education programs to enhance all partners' performance on State core and common measures. WorkSource staff actively engage with the local colleges' Worker Retraining staff to coordinate resources and services to dislocated workers, increasing retention in training and employment outcomes after training completion.

The State Workforce Board establishes criteria and performance levels and maintains the system for training services provider eligibility and performance. This information provides useful baseline data for reviewing the performance of other workforce development programs.

Continuous Quality Improvement in WorkSource Operations

Northwest Workforce Council, with agreement of the chief local elected official and in accordance with its Opportunity Act (WIOA) mandate, designates and certifies one-stop Career Center operators and those sites wishing to become, or remain, a part of the Northwest's WorkSource one-stop system. The Council is authorized to approve, approve provisionally with a required plan of action to address deficient areas, or deny an application. A technical assistance guide is sent that identifies both strengths and opportunities for improvement. Subsequent applications are reviewed to assure the Council's recommendations have been addressed and the expected quality system continues to mature in sophistication and deployment. Certification is for a three-year term.

The WorkSource certification process is managed by the Quality Assurance Committee's Certification Team, whose membership consists of representatives from organized labor and private industry. The full Council membership acts upon the Quality Assurance Committee's recommendations.

WIRELESS PLAN FOR WORKSOURCE CENTERS

Wireless internet is available for customer use at all three WorkSource Centers in the Northwest. An upgrade of current hardware is planned for the summer of 2020.

REMOTE ACCESS TO SERVICES

Customers who need remote access to services can use WorkSourceWA.com to obtain basic career services, labor market information, information about college programs and processes, and links to other job seeker sites.

Workforce development partner agencies work in collaboration with local transit authorities to provide access to mass transit for customers with no other sources of transportation. This includes free bus passes and assistance with route planning. Due to the rural nature of much of the Northwest region, public transportation can be distant from residences and rural route schedules generally preclude public transportation as an option for employees. Where public transportation is available, WorkSource Centers are located within easy access. Career pathways aligned with regional high school programs will explore access to high school bus transportation.

ADA COMPLIANCE

The Council will continue to improve its current system and procedures and to promote access and provide services to individuals with disabilities thus ensuring compliance with Section 188 and the American with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Physical and Programmatic Accessibility of Facilities, Programs, and Services

Accessibility is ensured through a variety of formal, regularly scheduled activities. A sub-group of the Regional Access Advisory Committee (formerly the Regional Accessibility Team) will continue to provide universal access reviews of all WorkSource Centers to ensure that the facilities and program services comply with all accessibility requirements and recommendations. These reviews occur with a predictable cycle that aligns with Center certification. Additionally, the Equal Opportunity Officer conducts an EO review of each center every year. This review includes, among other features, monitoring for compliance with all nine elements of the Washington State Nondiscrimination Plan, including accessibility, and the provision of reasonable accommodation and modifications. Additionally, the EO Officer evaluates NWC's policies and procedures to ensure programmatic access.

Technology

All WorkSource centers maintain assistive technologies to aid persons with a disability in accessing the resources of the one-stop system. Staff familiarization with the technology is maintained through short, intermittent, hands-on demonstrations conducted by DVR partner staff in the centers' All Staff meetings and via web-based instruction on staffs' knowledge management system, DAWN (Dynamically Aligned Workforce Network).

Materials for Individuals with Disabilities

A commitment to universal design is expressed through a standard review process to ensure that any new print or media material is accessible. The Council has developed guidelines that meet Web Content Access Guidelines 2.0 as an instructional aid to support staff in developing materials that work for everyone. Each Center has copies of *Your Accessible Career Resource Center* brochure, in both English and Spanish, prominently displayed which describes how to request reasonable accommodations. The region also has a robust policy, in place since 2004, on reasonable accommodation: *Provision of Reasonable Accommodation, Reasonable Modification, and Auxiliary Aids and Services to Persons with Disabilities*.

Staff Training and Support

New staff is oriented to policy and an array of desk guides, tools, links, and on-line training hosted on the partnership's knowledge management system, DAWN. This includes a self-paced, online curriculum: ADA Building Blocks. Other disability-related resources and important processes include guidance for requesting an accommodation, FAQ's for service animals, and available assistive technologies. The region's Competencies for Workforce Development Professionals includes a competency on diversity and another for Disability Specialist.

The Regional Access Advisory Committee meets quarterly and regularly evaluates related staff training needs at WorkSource Centers and within the WorkSource system. The Committee is creating a comprehensive inventory of the resources that assist staff in

service/advising all customer groups concerning issues of access. This work will result in a well-organized, easily accessible catalog of materials available on DAWN. Included are: WorkSource access tools, resources, and desk guides that enable all staff to readily access necessary information. Staff are also trained in referral processes to college Accessibility Resource Specialists, Disabled Veteran Outreach Counselors, and Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors.

ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER PROGRAMS

Northwest Workforce Council provides comprehensive and timely strategies to strengthen the workforce in response to the region's diverse needs. By employing an integrated approach with community and agency partners, the Council leverages and aligns resources in response to labor market demand. As businesses evolve, a diversified and highly adaptable workforce is necessary to compete in the labor market. The Council continues to innovate lifelong learning opportunities and to refine transferrable and occupational skills required in the modern work environment. The dislocated worker and adult programs, funded by the Opportunity Act, support the Council's mission by providing multiple pathways to employment for individuals at all stages in their careers; those who have experienced a layoff, are entering the workforce for the first time, are transitioning to different careers, need assistance to upgrade their skills to retain employment or have barriers to achieving economic self-sufficiency. Individuals served by these programs receive customized services to assist with career guidance, job search preparation, barriers identification with strategies to reduce or eliminate barriers to employment, remediation of occupational skills gaps and the attainment of work readiness skills to meet employer needs.

Northwest Workforce Council provides WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker programs. In doing so, the Council focuses on an integrated approach to service delivery to ensure comprehensive outreach and collaborative assistance to participants in the dislocated worker and adult programs. The integrated service design responds to business needs by using an industry/occupational sector as a guide to upskilling and employment activities. The approach encompasses the following operating principles:

- Keep it simple and easy to follow
- Focus on high-wage, high demand occupations
- Reduce labor/staff intensity in the customer flow
- Reduce duplication of upfront services/activities across funding streams
- Direct customer flow and service development by vocational/sector choice

Partners in the WorkSource system are cross trained on eligibility requirements and opportunities available from agencies providing services within the one-stop career center environment. Staff knowledge is built through:

- Regular presentations in all resident center staff meetings. This training supports an integrated and seamless approach to the customer referral process.
- The region's knowledge management system provides key process flow, designated referral experts, and standardized referral information templates for each of the area's workforce development programs. Referral pages include current recruitment status, key contacts, and next step instruction.
- Our key system integrator training through which staff together grow their knowledge of different system and staff functions and become aware of eligibility requirements of partner programs.

The workforce system has a no wrong door philosophy. Job seekers may enter the system through the career and technical colleges, DSHS, or other community-based organizations who will inform individuals about the array of systems available in the system. For example, an individual counseled by a Worker Retraining Coordinator may be referred to the IB Dislocated

Worker Program or Trade Act Assistance.

In order to improve programmatic access and system integration, the WorkSource system has established a designated “itinerant program desk” at Northwest Centers in the resource rooms.

While multiple service partners have full time resident presence within the three certified WorkSource Centers, scheduled, dedicated Center space is also made available to non-resident program operators through this program, to help facilitate access to the full range of partner employment and training services in our region. Availability of these program staff is posted with the workshop schedules on WorkSourceWA.com.

Customers also benefit from an integrated service design, which provides Wagner-Peyser funded job search preparation assistance to the general public through the job readiness workshop series instructed in both English and Spanish and other basic career services delivered within the WorkSource Centers. An additional workshop, Fresh Start, addresses the barriers experienced by justice involved job seekers. Initial and self-service program components are well articulated with individualized career and training program services for individuals who meet eligibility requirements and require individualized plans to overcome barriers to employment. The system serves as a valuable desk aid for those working with adult and dislocated worker applicants, as well as other populations. It provides, in an easy to access format, standardized information on eligibility criteria, relevant policies related to services to those populations, approved, printable forms for use in working with those participants, and related materials. The system benefits staff and customers as well by assuring that accurate information and uniform required materials are readily available for efficient and accurate service processes.

Customers who appear to meet eligibility requirements for WIOA IB and who are in need of customized job search assistance, career preparation, or training assistance are referred to a group engagement session at WorkSource for an overview of career development and job search services. These group sessions are targeted to unemployed UI recipients, the long-term unemployed, formerly self-employed individuals, displaced homemakers and adults with barriers to employment. After attending, customers have an opportunity to schedule an appointment with a representative to determine eligibility and appropriateness for IB Adult or Dislocated Worker services and begin customizing a plan based on employment and training needs.

Adults and dislocated workers who attend the engagement session receive a general overview of additional programs and services available at the WorkSource center. As an example, an unemployed or low-income individual may additionally benefit from services available through the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), Basic Food Employment and Training (BFET) programs, and Washington State Department of Labor and Industries. Veterans and eligible spouses receive priority of service for all programs and Employment Security Department (ESD) staff a representative to help veterans translate their skills to civilian employment and navigate community resources available to assist in that transition.

WIOA IB Adult and Dislocated Worker Program Eligibility

Customers enrolled in WIOA IB Adult and Dislocated Worker programs must meet eligibility criteria and demonstrate a need and ability to benefit from services to obtain or retain employment. The policies used to determine eligibility for the adult and the dislocated worker programs are Eligibility Verification and Priority Selection for Title IB Adults #01-21 and for Title IB Dislocated Worker # 01-20 respectively. Services are then customized based on the

evaluation of a customer's occupational skill set, work readiness, and viability to obtain employment in high demand occupations within key sectors. Once determined eligible for services, the customer develops an employment plan with a WIOA representative to determine timelines for goals and to begin researching labor market information for high-wage, high-demand employment.

Assessment

Representatives for the WIOA programs utilize a variety of assessment tools including interview outlines, electronic and paper assessments, and competency-based evaluations of basic skills to identify skills, interests and aptitude. Results from assessment tests and progress reports from community and technical colleges and partner agencies engaged with customers additionally guide career planning and help determine appropriate services to moderate skills gaps. For individuals requesting an Individual Training Account, IB staff recognize assessments previously completed.

Career Decision Making

NWC advocates the use of [CareerBridge](#) as one important source of information on occupations, training, and employment. The area refers to the ESD Occupations in Demand list for long and short-term occupational forecasts. The Occupations in Demand list aids in a consistent and appropriate navigation of employment and training opportunities. Career guidance and counseling is provided to adults and dislocated workers to make useful meaning of the information gathered to help inform good choices and wise investments in the career planning process aligned to their interest and skills.

WIOA Title I representatives actively participate in program advisory committees at the community and technical colleges to keep pace with labor and skill trends in the advanced manufacturing, health and construction sectors. These venues also provide opportunity to network with local businesses to customize training plans for WIOA and co-enrolled Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) participants in alignment with real time hiring needs.

Basic Skills

Basic skills competencies are crucial to remain competitive in the labor market. Adults and dislocated workers are counseled to participate in educational opportunities to remedy basic skills deficiencies. High school non-completers are directed toward high school equivalency (GED) preparation activities and the state's *High School 21+* programs local community and technical colleges and other high school equivalency preparation training centers. Financial support is available for testing fees and GED certification and HS21+ programs offer access to tuition waivers.

Non-English and limited English-speaking participants are also directed toward the local Adult Basic Education providers, and English Language Learner (ELL) programs at community and technical colleges, and community agencies to prepare workers to be sufficiently workplace functional in English.

WIOA provides pathways for immediate remediation of basic skills deficiencies and supports opportunities for advancement to longer term programs through colleges' Integrated Basic Education Skills Training (I-BEST) programs. I-BEST provides opportunity for individuals to earn a degree in high demand sectors while remediating basic skills. This strategy proves particularly beneficial to migrant seasonal farmworkers who speak English as a second language and

individuals with learning disabilities who require additional tutoring assistance for educational achievement.

There are multiple options to develop computer literacy. WIOA refers appropriate individuals to Goodwill computer classes, free online resources, and continuing education classes in the region. At the WorkSource Center, the Council's Northwest Computer Literacy Instruction Corps' (CLIC) mission is to educate the public in using computer technology to attain their employment and personal enrichment goals, especially for those whose information technology skills no longer meet minimum requirements in the workplace. CLIC addresses the fundamental need for computer knowledge and skill development in our community. Volunteers encourage life-long learning and deliver training through tutoring. The CLIC program also serves as a host for participant work experience or internships.

NWC CLIC tutors, through individualized tutoring sessions, focus on the basic skills and knowledge necessary to use a computer and the Internet independently. The goal is to teach customers how to use software, navigate and use the Internet and problem solve basic issues. This prepares the job seeker for more advanced computing classes at the community and technical colleges.

Lifelong Learning

The Council is committed to lifelong learning opportunities to assist businesses and the workforce in remaining competitive. Technologic fluency is a minimum requirement for a preponderance of jobs. For many, Information Technology (IT) skills are a necessary bridge to enter employment, academic classes, formal computer classes or vocational training. For those already employed, computer literacy is a key to keeping and advancing their employment.

The greatest need and benefit potential of these programs is in serving low skilled and low-income individuals; limited English-speaking individuals; mature workers (55+); and current workers whose IT skills no longer meet minimum requirements in the workplace.

Training Opportunities

There are multiple pathways for workers in need of occupation specific skills to obtain career goals. Training pathways are supported by an integrated service delivery model with multiple partner agencies to best leverage time and resources. Training may be combined to provide the most effective and efficient use of resources, including time and funds, to achieve career progress and economic self-sufficiency.

Classroom Training

Labor market indicators highlight the need for a workforce trained in occupational specific skills. The Council partners with local colleges to ensure programs meet industry standards and provide competencies aligned with contemporary labor market demands. WIOA program participants are counseled on multiple pathways leading to careers in fields in need of workers and which provide livable wages. Participants are assisted in pursuing training opportunities to develop skills and certifications necessary for successful employment, career advancement and wage progression.

Individuals with minimal work experience and the long-term unemployed separated from occupations no longer in demand benefit from certifications and degrees earned through programs at local educational institutions. Unemployment insurance recipients who seek training

to enter high-demand occupations access WIOA Title I tuition scholarships and may apply for a reprieve from UI job search requirements (Commissioner Approved Training) and additional unemployment benefits (Training Benefits) in support of training completion. WIOA scholarships support students in long-term training programs as well as short-term industry specific certifications to support the minimum qualifications of businesses.

The Council continues to work closely with community partners in identifying strategies to provide blended funding to low income and unemployed or underemployed adults in need of classroom training. WIOA coordinates with other funding sources such as federal financial aid including Pell, Worker Retraining, Basic Food Employment & Training, Washington College Grant, WA Opportunity Scholarship, and Foundations Grant to maximize financial resources available to students in need of classroom training. Staff from the community and technical colleges present information about enrollment, funding, and program availability to prospective participants. Staff meet once quarterly with representatives from the various funding sources as a measure of continuous quality improvement in combined outreach and service delivery efforts.

Work-based Training

WIOA underscores the benefits of work-based training opportunities for both business and employees. WIOA programs emphasize this through multiple strategies including internships, on-the-job training, pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs, and incumbent worker training.

Internship

Long-term unemployed and individuals with minimal work history benefit from internships to demonstrate work readiness skills, learn occupational skills and earn an employment reference. Businesses, non-profit and public agencies partner with NWC to design training plans and provide skills training. Often employment plans include additional services such as classroom training from community and technical colleges or job search assistance through the job readiness workshops.

Recognizing the benefit of work-based training, many of the two year certificate programs include a work based learning component also known as cooperative education or an internship. This is an academic program combining classroom theories with real on-the-job applications of learning through work experience. Students are awarded credit not for the work itself, but for the demonstration of learning which occurs in and throughout the work experience. Cooperative education develops a work history and valuable employer contacts for jobs after training completion.

On-the-Job Training (OJT)

On-the-job training is a successful strategy for employers to invest in and retain employees trained to their specific needs. WIOA representatives assist employers with creating training plans for adult and dislocated worker new hires while mentoring and tracking the success of the employee during the training process. Employers receive partial wage reimbursement for the new hire to offset the time and expense of providing needed training.

On-the-Job Training affords employers the flexibility to train workers to the specifications of the company and may include additional support from other agencies. The Council continues to focus on opportunities presented by expanded hiring needs in the advanced manufacturing sector.

Manufacturers now benefit from the combination of contracted classroom training instruction alongside hands-on group activities, as well as recruitment and retention support.

WorkSource team members respond to a local manufacturing/construction employer's staffing needs by implementing a screening and referral process which identifies job applicants in need of OJT for successful employment and aligns them with available positions. The referral process continues to be an effective strategy to connect the long-term unemployed with immediate employment opportunities with businesses willing to provide training.

NWC and ESD integrate service delivery in support of co-enrolled participants' employment and training goals. For example, WorkFirst participants engaged in job search activities, TAA co-enrolled participants, and veterans receiving assistance through the Veterans Services Representative can all benefit from OJT as a means to immediate employment as they are further supported by a network of WorkSource services.

Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship Services

Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship services are options an individual can explore when the customer comes into a WorkSource Career Center. The Plumbers and Pipefitters, Electrical and Carpenters Technical Training Centers for joint apprenticeship programs are located in Skagit County, offering opportunities for collaboration (see WAVE Tour description).

Support Services

Adults and dislocated workers engaged in Title I employment and training programs have access to support services to help offset expenses which may impede their ability to complete the activities necessary in order to return to employment. Financial assistance is available to help offset unexpected expenses relating to transportation, utility or rent costs while engaged in program services when no other community resources are available to meet the need.

WIOA IB staff participate in local community resource networks to understand and leverage supportive services available from community and faith-based organizations. Information obtained is shared at all staff Center meetings and referral information is available via the region's knowledge management system.

NWC partners with ESD in providing support services to individuals receiving classroom training and job search assistance through the Trade Adjustment Act program. NWC and ESD staffs communicate needs for supportive services across programs in order for a participant to successfully continue in classroom training. When a need is identified that would jeopardize a Trade Act participant's ability to complete classroom training, the participant is referred to the WIOA dislocated worker program for co-enrollment and provision of necessary supportive services which results in training completion. A similar process is in place to assist Trade participants during job search. If there are expenses not available under the TAA program for individuals to relocate for employment or for job search assistance, funds may be provided from WIOA I-B dislocated worker program to assist TAA participants to return to work.

YOUNG ADULT PROGRAMS

The Northwest Workforce Council's WIOA Title I-B Young Adult program provides complementary services to improve employability through education, work-based learning, and training opportunities. Young Adult services develop workplace attributes and interpersonal skills valued by local industry. Programs serve eligible young adults, 16-21 years with in-school services, and 16-24 years with out of school services.

The WIOA Young Adult program applies a competency-based approach to assessment and services using Workforce Skills Standards to prepare young adults for full-time employment of post-secondary and occupational learning with strong relationships to the job market and employers.

The Council provides leadership in growing collaborations between businesses, secondary, and post-secondary educational institutions and community service providers to ensure effective and meaningful workforce preparation experiences for young adults. Outstanding results are consistently achieved by engaging education, business, labor, and community service providers to develop a coordinated system which provides basic academic, life, work, and technical skills preparation for workers as defined by industry. The Council strives to incorporate these areas of skill development in all community approaches to young adult employment preparation. The Council engages business to identify their needs and expectations. This information is then used to assist young adults in acquiring the skills, attributes and knowledge demanded by business.

The Council remains active in focusing resources to collectively address systemic issues of workforce development. NWC and partners leverage resources beyond those available through WIOA Title I-B to create pipelines of new workers to meet emerging skills gaps. This begins with career planning and preparation services that promote post-secondary education programs, apprenticeships, and STEM occupations that prepare students for high-wage, high-demand jobs. Through community partnerships, NWC influences the development of the workforce in significantly greater proportion than WIOA funding alone would be able to achieve.

The WIOA Young Adult program engages in joint outreach, marketing, and recruiting efforts with secondary schools, community and technical colleges, business organizations, community-based young adult service providers, and other partner staff for referral of youth to workforce preparation services within the community. Emphasis is placed on outreach to target WIOA populations with an emphasis on service to out of school young adults, including increased focus on re-engagement services for those who have dropped out of high school.

Eligibility criteria require that the young adults most in need receive priority services. Therefore, there is active recruitment for low-income youth, those with limited English language skills, dropouts, those pregnant and parenting, justice-involved, individuals in the Foster System, individuals experiencing homelessness, and those young adults considered to have a disability.

Eligible youth are guided through an assessment to determine their education and workplace competencies and deficiencies, in turn helping determine which services are best suited to prepare them for employment. Assessment areas include: strengths, basic and academic skill level, occupational skills attainment, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitude, developmental needs, and need for supportive services to permit participation in program

services. Results of assessments are used to develop an Individual Service Strategy (employment plan) which identifies service needs and applicable program elements, employment/career goals, non-traditional occupations (if applicable), achievement objectives, and appropriate support services.

Young Adult Service Delivery System Components

The Council champions a mix of approaches to provide access to career information, education, work experience and training to prepare young adults for post-secondary education, training and employment. Opportunities are customized based on individually assessed need and available resources to support long-term employment goals. The following is a summary of services available, including those addressing the WIOA required 14 Young Adult Program elements, provided by NWC and its regional partners.

Tutoring, Study Skills Training, and Instruction

These include services available through local school districts; non-profit agencies; community organizations; and business and volunteer involvement for the purpose of dropout prevention, school retention, skill development, drop out reengagement and as preparation for specific occupations.

Specific examples of such services for at-risk in school young adults enrolled in WIOA Title IB include referrals and tuition assistance for basic skills remediation and credit catch-up. For young adults in post-secondary programs, school volunteer and paid tutors are provided when students need additional educational support.

Basic Skills

Competencies in basic skills are crucial to the success of young adults in the labor market. Those lacking basic educational skills are counseled to participate in remedial education. A variety of approaches are used to assess academic skills including the review of school transcripts and standardized test results released by school districts, administration of the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS), or referral for more in depth testing. High school non-completers are counseled toward high school completion, participation in drop out reengagement services, or other GED or high school completion services available through NWC partnerships. NWC coordinates with local community colleges to provide services and career supports for young adults already enrolled in high school completion programs, basic skill remediation, and vocational training.

Many out-of-school young adults require assistance along a guided pathway to employment. Working with the colleges and other community partners, NWC IB staff provide a comprehensive plan to employment with interventions and services critical to moving young adults far enough on the skill ladder to promote lasting success in the job market.

Alternative Secondary School Services

These include services provided by school districts; community and technical colleges; Job Corps; or any entity whose education program meets local and state education requirements for a high school diploma or GED.

NWC staff are connected at all the area alternative schools and refer and support students needing to complete secondary school as part of the service package. NWC also partners with

local school districts and Community and Technical Colleges in innovative drop out re-engagement programs, providing work based learning opportunities in tandem with high school completion and GED services.

Paid and Unpaid work Experiences

Work experiences are planned, structured, learning experiences provided at a business. NWC has a network of public and private sector employers who host paid and unpaid work experience opportunities supported by NWC staff and resources. These experiences help youth acquire an understanding of personal attributes, knowledge, and skills needed to obtain and advance in employment and provide an opportunity for career exploration and skill development.

Work experiences may include the following elements:

- Application of academic skills within a work context
- Instruction in employability skills or workplace skills such as the employer defined Workforce Skills Standards
- Exposure to various aspects of an industry or occupation
- Adult mentorship
- Integration of basic academic skills into work activities

Labor Market and Career Decision-Making

A fundamental feature of service delivery design for young adults, both in-school and out of school, is exposing them to the tools necessary to research career interests, how those interests and aptitudes line up with occupations available in the local labor market, and how to create a career pathway to access those occupations. Training is intended to assist young adults become lifelong learners and know where and how to access timely, relevant labor market data to assist in their employment and career development. Instruction is provided on how to use the resources available in the WorkSource Centers and online such as ONetonline.org, WorkSourceWA.com, Career Bridge, Washington State Occupations In Demand list, as well as training on the use of informational Interviewing with employers for labor market and employment information. The identified key industry sectors are a particular focus to guide young adults to understand the in- demand occupations in the local labor market.

Occupational skills training

Occupational skills training occurs in a variety of ways. Young adults have options to develop or increase occupational skills training through vocational/technical training as well as work-based training modalities. Work-based training can include work experience, internships, on the job training, pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs. NWC supports young adults in achieving certificates and credentials in in-demand occupations, with a focus on the key sectors of manufacturing, health care, and construction. Priority is given to occupational skills training through Community and Technical College Partnerships in the region's key sectors in high demand industries.

Leadership Development Opportunities

NWC sponsors young adults in a variety of ways to foster leadership development. Examples include attendance at Leadership Institutes and Washington Business Week programs in the area related to their career interests. NWC also supports AmeriCorps Volunteers who assist young

adults in enrolling in programs that develop capacity for leadership and peer mentoring. This includes units on teamwork, problem solving, decision-making, and conflict resolution. Another excellent example of a leadership development opportunity is *Varsity in Volunteerism*, a program provided in partnership with NWC, United General District 304, United Way, and the Skagit Volunteer Center. Through this service, students receive a varsity letter for volunteerism through their high school.

Leadership skills are also developed through the instruction of Workforce Skills Standards and delivering the Workplace Excellence Series (WPE) of workshops. WPE is designed to help young adults understand and deliver the essential workplace skills that companies demand today. Participants of the up to ten module program gain a better understanding of the employer's perspective, practical skills, and the interpersonal skills needed in the workforce such as how to communicate clearly on the job, how to succeed in teams and changing environments, how to work efficiently, and how to identify and cultivate a positive company image.

Supportive Services

Supportive services are provided an enrolled young adult in accordance with existing Council Policy WIOA 01-11 and when necessary to enable successful participation in their services plan. These are coordinated with other community resources identified by staff and through use of the Washington State 2-1-1 website. Services are directly provided with WIOA funds only when other community resources are not available and may include, but are not limited to: transportation assistance including bus passes; child care services; clothing assistance for interviews and internships; safety and job specific clothing and equipment upon placement in unsubsidized employment; and emergency temporary housing.

Adult mentoring for a total of not less than 12 months

NWC staff are represented in local Young Adult Management Networks and referrals are made to organizations such as Big Brothers/ Big Sisters, high school-based mentoring programs, and similar programs within the region. Internship and worksite supervisors are coached in their roles as both supervisors and mentors and encouraged to continue a mentoring relationship with the young adults after their work placement ends.

Comprehensive guidance and counseling, as appropriate

All young adults who request assistance or demonstrate need, or are otherwise assessed as appropriate are referred for drug, alcohol, and personal counseling. NWC collaborates closely with community-based agencies and makes informed referrals to assure comprehensive guidance and counseling is available as needed.

Job search training

During the planning process and throughout their participation, all eligible young adults are provided labor market information about key sectors including demand, wages, and long-term outlook. NWC staff provide instruction on job search components such as how to obtain labor market information, assess their skills, complete a resume and application, and conduct themselves in informational or employment interviews. Staff provide training to community partners in job search components to reach non-WIOA eligible young adults, and market WorkSource job search services within the community.

Financial Literacy Education

Financial literacy activities are provided in a variety of ways to assist young adults to understand basic financial concepts to make informed financial decisions. This includes providing them access to tools and resources needed to manage a budget through training and to succeed in work and life. Young adults have access to instruction in related workshops offered at WorkSource and with community providers offering financial literacy services in the four county area, including the Asset Coalition, community action agencies, and local banks and credit unions offering training in maintaining checking accounts, credit management and related issues.

Entrepreneurial Skills Training

NWC staff have a variety of resources available to assist young adults interested in learning how to prepare for self-employment and building a business. Along with the financial literacy services which are fundamental in business, young adults access resources available at WorkSource Centers and through training providers and free workshops in the region including SCORE; Small Business Administration (SBA) programs, and Economic Development Associations in each county.

Follow-up services for WIOA

NWC staff maintains contact a minimum of once per quarter with all young adults served for a full 12 months after completion of participation. The frequency and intensity of follow up increases based on individual need. Services provided may include the same support services available during active participation, as well as other services that may be needed for job retention, or completion of a credential program, including: mentoring; labor market information; financial literacy; post-secondary preparation/transition; and assistance addressing work-related problems.

Preparation/Transition to Post-secondary Education and Training

NWC and partners provide a range of services/activities which help both in-school and out of school young adults prepare for transition to post-secondary education and training. NWC staff provide workshops focusing on labor market and development of career pathways at area high schools, at WorkSource Centers, and as requested in the community. Staff assist young adults to connect with local community and technical colleges to explore postsecondary options; assist them in understanding costs and to connect with financial assistance opportunities to fund postsecondary training including federal financial aid, scholarships, and grants; assist with the college admission process; and educate them on how to manage a budget to prepare for time in training. Other activities include annually hosting a Washington Apprenticeship Vocational Education (WAVE) Tour which invites high school juniors and seniors in the region to participate in hands on demonstrations presented by multiple registered Apprenticeship programs, linked to the key sectors of manufacturing and construction.

Some examples of Local WIOA Young Adult Initiatives which highlight partnerships, work-based learning models, and leveraging of resources are provided below.

Experience Work Project

A gap between the skills possessed by young workers and the expectations of employers continues to widen, fueled in part by the Great Recession and long periods of young adult unemployment or absence of work history. In response, the Council partnered with Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce to create the Experience Work Project. The Project matches students in high school and college vocational training programs with businesses

offering on-site opportunities for career exploration, job shadow or internship. Mentorship relationships are created which assist young adults moving into the workplace. Students participate in robust learning experiences throughout the year. Mentors rate students' professional behaviors as either meeting or exceeding their expectations. Business interest and participation in this program has increased markedly in recent years.

Varsity in Volunteerism (VIV)

VIV is a unique collaboration with several school districts to encourage students to stay in school by connecting work with learning and creating recognition within the school about the value of work. The program recognizes student volunteer hours with a high school varsity letter. Sponsors include United General Hospital, United Way, Sedro Woolley Chamber of Commerce, Sedro Woolley High School, Burlington-Edison High School, Concrete High School, Skagit County Child and Family Consortium and Northwest Workforce Council. The program provides positive opportunities for students to engage in the workplace, learn about appropriate workplace roles and behavior, explore careers and gain work-related skills. VIV provides local employers/businesses and non-profit organizations a pool of willing and eager workers to assist with projects as they learn about the world of work. Training for supervisors on successfully working with young adults is provided. Young adults attend a series of workshops to develop soft skills, work readiness, and employment retention skills. Students achieving 100 volunteer hours are rewarded with a varsity letter. Employers note their businesses are enhanced through this association.

Washington Apprenticeship Vocational Education (WAVE) Tour

The annual WAVE tour involves young adults in apprenticeship vocational exploration activities at the Pipefitters, Electrical, and Carpenters Technical Training Centers. Additional trades representatives such as heavy equipment operators, sheet metal workers, laborers, plumbers, and sprinkler installers are also present, offering students exposure to trades offered beyond those available locally. The purpose is to interest young people in the potential for jobs in the trades and linking the academic skills necessary for success. NWC participates in coordinating this event and recruiting young adults from area high schools from Island, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom counties. As part of the Tour, students receive hands on training in various trades. Pipe bending, screw gun races, and using math to solve real electrical problems are popular activities. They hear workers speak firsthand on apprenticeship occupations, preparation, and the benefits of trade careers. Students see, touch and experience the various trades.

Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship Training Initiatives

These initiatives are work-based training models offered in the region through coordinated efforts of NWC, registered apprenticeships, and the community and technical colleges. The trainings provide a combination of basic skill and occupational instruction that prepares workers for competitive entry within the advanced manufacturing and construction industries. Upon completion of the training, job seekers obtain a variation of the following credentials: manufacturing basics; OSHA; flagging; forklift; blueprint reading; trades math; and LEAN principles. These exemplify stackable credentials, upon which the individual can add additional credentials gained on the job or through return for

additional training to advance on their career path. Pre-apprenticeship opportunities are currently offered in partnership with the Carpenters, Ironworkers, and ANEW for other construction trades., NWC plans to sustain and increase pre-apprenticeship offerings, as feasible, across the region.

Drop Out Reengagement Programs

NWC, Community and Technical Colleges, and school districts in the region are developing innovative programming to focus on re-engaging young adults 16-21 who have dropped out of high school. The three technical and community colleges all offer drop-out re-engagement and/or 1418 high school completion programs. For young adults enrolled in the re-engagement program, the college provides classroom instruction for High School Completion, including High School 21+, GED, and basic skills improvement. NWC provides hands on, work based training services, including paid internships and mentorship experiences, and provides the structure and support needed to help the student achieve both academic and career success.

RAPID RESPONSE TO LAYOFFS AND CLOSURES

The Council coordinates and oversees a highly engaged and coordinated rapid response system. Execution of an integrated plan for all dislocated worker programs including Trade Act, Worker Retraining and WIOA Title IB programs provides focus on businesses' workforce needs and provides for a consistent, timely, high quality, and innovative approach to the delivery of services to all dislocated adults. Through Council leadership, rapid response practitioners exhibit an array of competencies across many disciplines which helps create seamless solutions for all customers. Rapid Response is simultaneously strategic and operational. Solutions are customized to needs and yet consistent in their quality.

The Council oversees a vision of Rapid Response as a comprehensive economic transition model which requires the engagement of leadership and practitioners. A wide area network of practitioners and stakeholders comprise an informal "early warning system" which alert partners to potential job loss, allowing a system response to avoid or minimize job loss. Tools such as the Shared Work Program, Trade Act for Businesses, targeted workforce-related advocacy, and local economic development programs can help to avert the loss of jobs from the Northwest economy.

The Council's coordination of services, activities, resources and benefits facilitate the goal of returning affected individuals to work, in demand occupations, as quickly as possible. Critical attributes of the Northwest's Rapid Response system include:

- A systematic orientation towards layoff prevention, strategic planning, and reemployment
- Mastery of applicable rules and regulations
- Establishment and maintenance of broad partnerships
- Clear and consistent procedures and policies
- Leadership seeks comprehensive solutions over menu-based services
- Properly trained staff

During a layoff of significance, onsite Rapid Response orientations are coordinated within a broad partnership and with the State Dislocated Worker Unit. Orientations include on site information on the applications and requirements of Unemployment Insurance. Workers receive orientation to all applicable dislocated worker programs (WIOA, Worker Retraining, and Trade Act) and then followed up with staff assisted sessions where the dislocated worker is assisted with the application and intake for multiple programs.

Workers are counseled in multiple career pathways to attain reemployment and recapture or improve their wages. Participants are provided a review of their assessment materials and develop a plan. Using assessment materials, participants complete a reality check of the plan, develop a service plan to verify goals are congruent with assessment results and will lead to employment in a demand occupation. Part of the plan development includes eligibility and coordination of all dislocated worker funding streams. For those participants accessing training resources, Trade Act, WIOA and Worker Retraining funds are aligned and coordinated for the participant through a collaborative approach.

An Individual Training Account proposal is used by WIOA participants which documents the need for training and assessment followed by diagnostic assessment, when appropriate, in the following areas:

- Employment history and accomplishments
- Prior training
- Education history
- Re-Employment skills
 - Making career decisions and goal setting
 - Using labor market information
 - Preparing a resume and cover letter
 - Filling out applications
 - Interviewing
- Job-keeping skills
- Motivation, attitude and work values
- Basic Skills: reading, math, writing, remedial education, English as a second language (ESL)
- Occupational skills and abilities
- Aptitudes
- Individual employment goal and labor market needs
- Career interests
- Short- and long-term education and career goals
- Life circumstances and barriers to participation

For those who have marketable job skills and who will benefit from intensive job search assistance, services are coordinated to ensure a quick re-entry into the workforce at a competitive wage.

Coordination of Transportation and Other Support Services

NWC takes an energetic and proactive role in the coordination of the workforce investment activities throughout the four-county region. This philosophy extends to the provision of or referral for supportive services, including transportation and other support needed by those participating in WIOA services under all Titles. Activities that build capacity and effectiveness are fostered, duplicate or inefficient practices are discouraged.

Supportive services are provided when necessary to enable successful participation. Information on availability of supportive services is provided to clients and customers of all WIOA programs. Services may include, but are not limited to: transportation assistance including bus passes, or short term provision of prepaid gas cards. Carpooling among those engaged in group training activities is encouraged. Other Title I funded support services available include childcare services; clothing assistance for interviews and internships; emergency housing assistance; safety and job specific clothing and equipment upon placement in unsubsidized employment.

Partners remain aware and updated on supportive services through a variety of mechanisms, including use of DAWN, the knowledge management system utilized by the WorkSource partnership in the Northwest. DAWN includes information on eligibility for the various forms of supportive services, and the referral process and related information needed to assure clients can access the services identified. These are coordinated with other community resources identified by partnership staff and through use of the Washington State 2-1-1 website: <https://wa211.org/>.

In addition, Northwest Workforce Council and partner staff regularly attend scheduled Community Resource Network meetings. These meetings include representation from a broad network of community service providers, faith-based organizations, healthcare providers, transit providers and others. A feature of each meeting is sharing information on available community resources. For example, energy assistance availability or transportation vouchers offered by faith-based organizations. Partner staff attending assure that, as new support service resources are identified, they are reported at WorkSource all staff meetings and included on DAWN for access by partner staff.

WIOA TITLE III, WAGNER-PEYSER SERVICE COORDINATION

As described elsewhere in this plan, NWC convenes multiple partnership tables to ensure the workforce system operates as a well-aligned and integrated system. The NWC articulates its expectation for the system to function in this manner through policy, guidance, and quality standards and monitors progress through its Quality Assurance Committee.

The Employment Security Department (ESD) is co-located in each of the region's WorkSource Centers, provides Basic Career Services as outlined under WIOA, and has representation on the region's Northwest Workforce Partner Management Team which includes representation of all system partners, WorkSource Operations Group, Regional Access Advisory Committee, and Customer Service Delivery Design Review Task Team. Staff use the regional knowledge management system - DAWN, Skype for Business, and attend regular Center-based All Staff meetings to improve coordination of activities.

INTEGRATION OF TITLE I WITH ABE TITLE II

The Council, through its board structure, partnership tables and ongoing service delivery design activities regularly engages adult education and literacy providers throughout the four-county region to coordinate Title I services with those available under Title II. Title II providers include Bellingham Technical College, Whatcom Community College, Skagit Valley College, Community Action of Skagit County and Northwest Indian College.

Those enrolled in Title I services who have not yet achieved a high school diploma or equivalency (GED), or do not have the basic skills necessary to succeed in further vocational training or to otherwise meet the needs of local employers are regularly referred to Title II partners for adult basic education or literacy services as part of their service plan. Likewise, the adult education and literacy services partners refer students participating in their educational activities to NWC for the range of workforce preparation activities available through WIOA title

For example, young adults who lack either a high school credential or GED, as well as work experience or work references, receive complementary services such as a paid Internship through NWC and Title I funds, while engaged in basic skills training at a partner adult education provider. Whatcom Community, Skagit Valley and Bellingham Technical Colleges offer programs such as High School 21+, to support out-of-school young adults and adults 21 and older in completing basic skills toward earning a high school diploma, with options for also earning college credit. Title I services are available to support such students with additional vocational training when basic skills levels permit.

The NWC and Title II partners have worked collaboratively since 2016 to complete discussion and review of each partner's Title II Plans when those plans are renewed. Partners submit the plans to NWC staff who review the plans for alignment with WIOA Plans and One-Stop MOUs. Partners have agreed to follow that process as Title II plans are prepared for submission going forward.

SERVING PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY

The Northwest Workforce Development area has held a partnership table regarding improved access and services to people with disabilities that convened and met regularly throughout the duration of the Workforce Investment Act. The products and outcome of that team included:

- Provision of Reasonable Accommodation, Reasonable Modification, and Auxiliary Aids and Services to Persons with Disabilities Policy
- Procedural desk guides
- Regular accessibility reviews (architectural and programmatic) of the WorkSource Centers
- Identification and provision of direct service staff training
- Technical Assistance
- Marketing materials for job seekers with disabilities
- Competencies for Disability Specialists

In order remain contemporary and meet the requirements of WIOA, the team expanded its scope and membership through the Regional Access Advisory Committee (RAAC). Staff from Division of Services for the Blind has joined this partnership team. Ongoing members include: NWC Board Member and DVR supervisor, DVR counselors, the NWC's Equal Opportunity Officer, the WorkSource Regional Manager, Disabled Veteran Outreach Program Staff, Accessibility Resource Specialists from the Community and Technical Colleges, and Employment Security Staff. Meeting notices are posted on the Northwest Workforce Council Board web site and other community meetings.

Work completed through the RAAC includes:

- Created a comprehensive access review tool to review WorkSource Centers against both compliance requirements and a set of customer service standards
- Developed Partnership Standards for creating accessible documents (meets WAG 2.0).
- Charged a cross- functional cross-partnership task team to: complete a comprehensive inventory of the resources that assist staff in serving/advising any customer around issues of access for all customer groups, including those with disabilities. This work will result in a well-organized, easily accessible catalog of materials available on the Dynamically Aligned Workforce Network (DAWN), the partnership intranet site for knowledge management. Included are: WorkSource access tools, resources, and desk guides that are conveniently organized and enable all staff to readily access necessary information. If there are items missing, the team will create or locate the tool, resource, or guide.

In addition to this partnership team, the Northwest Workforce Council and the local DVR offices in Bellingham, Mt. Vernon, and Oak Harbor fully support the statewide agreement, Shared Vision, Values, & Principles of Collaboration between DSHS Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DSHS/DVR) and Washington Workforce Association (WWA). This cooperative agreement outlines shared vision and values in providing services to job seekers with disabilities and principles of collaboration which outlines the roles and responsibilities of each partner. NWC will use this agreement as a model for additional state and local entities who wish to enter a cooperative agreement to improve the employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

TITLE I PROCUREMENT PROCESS

The Council will conduct competitive procurements to secure one-stop operator and youth program services from appropriate providers for Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and for any other programs administered by the Council in compliance with Washington State policy and applicable federal regulations. The Council has a robust conflict of interest policy and internal controls in place to ensure that development and conduct of the Council's competition is kept separate and apart from the Council staff, so they may participate as an applicant to provide services. The Council will use a "Request for Proposal" (RFP) system applying the Competitive Proposal process as specified in Council procurement Policy WIOA 01-23.

The Council will provide required advance public notice of upcoming Request for Proposal processes, including announcements on the NWC Board website, the newspaper with the highest circulation in the region, and other effective notice mechanisms.

When conducting procurements, the Council will apply selection criteria that will be clearly specified in the RFP materials and include at a minimum evaluation of the following components: agency qualification; program design; audit and performance reports; performance goals; cost analysis; and additional relevant categories. The Council will then make the final selection of providers to be funded based on those proposals that are most responsive to the request, most advantageous to the workforce area, and most efficient in terms of quality and cost.

PROVISION OF ADULT AND DISLOCATED WORKER TRAINING SERVICES

Adult and Dislocated Worker classroom training services are provided through Individual Training Accounts (ITA). Agreements with educational institutions are established, unless one of several exceptions specified in WIOA Section 680.320 apply.

Individual Training Accounts (ITA) will be issued pursuant to NWC Policy 01-10 which describes all requirements including that training supports in-demand occupations and is provided by institutions on the Eligible Training Provider List. NWC's standard ITA procedures ensure that the trainee explores training provider options and states on their application why they have chosen the specific training provider.

On-the-Job and customized training may be provided by employers through a contract with the Adult and Dislocated Worker service provider according to the NWC Policy 01-26 OJT.

NWC and regional training partners have a successful history of providing incumbent worker training. Incumbent worker training will be explored under the WIOA local options and a policy will be developed if the option is chosen.

WORKSOURCE INTEGRATED TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS

WIOA IB, Wagner Peyser, Trade Act, and Labor and Industry staff that work out of a WorkSource Center have all implemented the state Management Information System (MIS) system to record basic and individualized support and training services. In the Northwest, no local partners have entered into data sharing agreements and opted in to use the state MIS system.

The WorkSource Centers implemented the new statewide WorkSourceWA.com job match and case management system. WIOA IB and Wagner-Peyser funded services use the system for eligibility determination, register participants, document services and outcomes, and document case notes. WIOA IB programs continue to maintain business practices for program forms. As system improvements have occurred, staff are entering business services as appropriate.

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

See Appendix E

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The LWDB values Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) and takes action to remove or reduce barriers. The focus here is on the system integration so that all job seekers have access to information, services and programs. This section outlines the values expressed by the LWDB, leadership and staff, how they are articulated in policy and procedure and how they are operationalized within our system. Concrete examples illustrate how values are made actionable and then saturated within the system. The Northwest's Quality Plan includes supporting staff to develop as professionals so that they meet the needs of diverse populations. This section concludes with NWC's planning for accountability and continuous quality improvement in serving diversity. The Northwest has a relatively new standing committee, the Regional Access Advisory Committee (RAAC) that attends to DEI.

Expressed Commitment

Senior leadership in the Northwest Partnership values and recognizes:

- Diversity both strengthens the partnership's cultural vitality while increasing innovations and effectiveness. Many local businesses express value in a diverse workforce, are open to learning more about the talent pool of qualified job seekers, and understand diversity helps drive positive business results.
- Eliminating barriers that prevent full participation results in equity: fair treatment, access, and opportunity.
- Inclusion involves creating environments where an individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, and supported.

These values are embedded in the Northwest Workforce Council's **Framework for Doing Business** and in the **Quality Standards** embedded in the Council's WorkSource Center Certification process (notably, the application). They are addressed by leaders across the partnership as evidenced by the time and attention given to hire, train, and support a diverse workforce that provides services to a diverse public. Front line staff are included in developing strategies to meet goals, provide effective, targeted outreach, and develop service improvements.

Policy and Procedures

Management staff review, with intention, the WIOA IB and WorkSource policies to ensure that policies and procedures are culturally responsive, create no adverse impacts, and support the merits of DEI as outlined above.

System policies and procedures include:

- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Implementation of WIOA. The MOU agreement provides shared definitions, values, and services expectations across the partnership and with each partner entity regarding access and equal, effective, and meaningful participation by all individuals, including those with barriers. The MOU specifically addresses access as follows:

“Access to the services provided through the WorkSource Centers and at all partner organization locations is essential to meeting the requirements of WIOA. Job

candidates, workers, and businesses must be able to access all information and participate in services relevant to them via visits to physical locations as well as in virtual spaces. Council has established a regional committee to assist and ensure the workforce development system is providing unrestricted customer access, including to WIOA's prioritized individuals with barriers to employment."

Regional Access Advisory Committee – facilitated by NWC board member with a focus on access to services for all customers throughout the local workforce system. The committee evaluates and reports operational concerns and recommendations to the Northwest Workforce Management."

- Integrated Front-End Service Policy. This policy articulates a front-end assessment for all job seekers in a WorkSource center so that they may access appropriate services, information, and programs.
- Customer Concern and Complaint Resolution Policy. This policy informs staff of the processes when a customer has a concern or complaint so that issues may be promptly addressed, and staff understand and inform customers of their rights to file a complaint.
- Reasonable Accommodations. This policy outlines processes to ensure that customers with disabilities are afforded the same opportunities as other job seekers.
- Priority of Service for Veterans and Eligible Spouses. This policy outlines staff and agency responsibilities for implementing priority of service for qualified programs.
- WorkSource Staff Protocols. This comprehensive document was updated in 2019. It articulates values, protocols, and procedures in each certified WorkSource Center. A section is dedicated to reasonable accommodation, which outlines the philosophy of policy and practice: "To create an inviting and inclusive environment where all persons have equal access to Center services."
- The Regional Safety Plan attends to the needs of individuals with disabilities.
- 508 Compliance Style Guide. This document outlines standards and provides guidelines for creating accessible documents, presentations, and websites.
- An update to the 508-style guide, Standards for Creating Accessible Documents was adopted by in 2019.

Governance Structure

Regional Access Advisory Committee (RAAC)

WIOA encourages local boards to include in their governance structure advisory committees that provide information or propose strategies to assist the Board in achieving goals. The RAAC is chaired by a Council member and consists of representatives of partner programs, community organizations, and the general public. The role of this committee is to recommend best or promising practices for physical and programmatic accessibility, conduct oversight with respect to access issues, provide a forum for initial discussions on

emerging issues affecting access for the WIOA 14 targeted populations, provide an analysis of customer satisfaction data including recommending goals for improvement and increased accountability.

Of key import to formulating the new Board standing committee was to highlight and sustain a focus not only on physical accessibility, but equal attention be given to programmatic accessibility. In delving into issues of programmatic accessibility, the RAAC's first initiative was to redesign the internal, comprehensive, **Access Review Guide**. This guide clearly highlights programmatic access criteria. This is described below under center certification process.

The Regional Access Advisory Committee's current initiative is to create a comprehensive inventory of the resources that assist staff in serving/advising any customer around issues of access for all customer groups. This work will result in a well-organized, easily accessible catalog of materials available on, DAWN. Included are: WorkSource access tools, resources, and desk guides that are conveniently organized and enable all staff to readily access necessary information. Staff within the WorkSource system is also trained regarding the resources available within the system to promote access for individuals with disabilities. This includes referrals to college Accessibility Resources Specialists, Disabled Veteran Outreach Counselors, and Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors.

Center Certification Process

A section of the certification application requires the system's centers to identify and illustrate how access is ensured. It requires a deliberative response on actions taken to improve customer access to basic and individualized services.

Within the three-year certification cycle, each Center must have had a comprehensive access review utilizing the Access Review Guide. The review is conducted by a team representing multiple partners in the system. The review includes compliance requirements (e.g. WIOA Section 188, Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, Equal Opportunity requirements outlined in the states non-discrimination plan). Areas under review contain standards and assessment probes for:

- Timeliness and responsiveness in service provision
- Service connections
- Customer communications
- Outreach standards
- Cultural and physical environment

The results of the comprehensive access review are provided to the RAAC and the Partnership Management Team to resolve any issues that may arise. The reports for each center are included in the Centers' certification application.

The Certification Team, when determining a Center certified and meeting the standards to operate under the WorkSource brand, provides a technical assistance report to include in WorkSource Quality Improvement Plan. Many items on the plan have been addressed or are in process. Items in process include:

- Improve access to the WorkSource system's assets. A customer flow team is chartered and working on final design requirements of a customer flow model. The itinerant desk program presence was expanded to Whidbey and Skagit.
- Increase Spanish signage in Centers, make comment cards readily available in Spanish. Spanish comment cards are available in all Centers. Bilingual signage is underway.
- Provide new system staff an orientation to the system, partnership, and culture. A partnership orientation team is chartered and developing this orientation.

Expanding ADA Compliance

The LWDB will improve its current system and procedures and continue to promote access and provide services to individuals with disabilities thus ensuring compliance with Section 188 and the following:

American with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Accessibility of facilities, programs and services occurs through a variety of formal, regularly scheduled activities. A sub-group of the Regional One-Stop Access Advisory Committee will continue to provide universal access reviews of all WorkSource Centers to ensure that the facilities and program services comply with all accessibility requirements and recommendations. As mentioned above, these reviews occur with a predictable cycle that aligns with Center certification. Additionally, the Equal Opportunity Officer conducts an EO review of each center every year. Elements of this review include monitoring for compliance of all nine elements of the Nondiscrimination Plan, accessibility, and the provision of reasonable accommodation and modifications. The EO Officer evaluates the LWDB's Policies and procedures to ensure programmatic access.

Technology.

WorkSource Northwest Career Centers maintain assistive technologies to aid persons with a disability in accessing the resources of the one-stop system. Staff familiarization with the technology is maintained through short, intermittent, hands-on demonstrations conducted by DVR partner staff in the centers' All Staff meetings and via web-based instruction on staffs' knowledge management system, DAWN.

Materials for Individual with Disabilities

A commitment to universal design is expressed through a standard review process for any new print or media material are accessible. The Northwest Workforce Council developed document accessibility guidelines as an instructional aid for staff so that staff develop materials that work for everyone. Each Center has copies of Your Accessible Career Resource Center brochure, in English and Spanish, prominently displayed which outlines how to request reasonable accommodations.

Staff Training and Support

New staff is oriented to policy and an array of desk guides, tools, links, and on-line training hosted on the partnership's knowledge management system, DAWN. The region has a robust policy, in place since 2004: Provision of Reasonable Accommodation, Reasonable

Modification, and Auxiliary Aids and Services to Persons with Disabilities. The Equal Opportunity (EO) training is scheduled twice per year. New staff and those who have not participated in EO training within the prior two years attend these training sessions.

DAWN, the region's knowledge management system for workforce partners, includes a self-paced, online curriculum, ADA Building Blocks. Other disability-related resources and important processes include guidance for requesting an accommodation, FAQ's for service animals, and available assistive technologies. The region's Competencies for Workforce Development Professionals includes a competency on diversity and another for Disability Specialist. The Regional Access Advisory Committee meets quarterly to evaluate related staff training needs at WorkSource Centers and within the WorkSource system.

Services, System Improvements, Projects

This section provides illustrations where the LWDB turns dialogue and intention into action. The LWDB focuses on key work processes and innovations with the aim of creating value for the customer and achieving our goals.

Inclusive Environments.

Specific attention is consistently given to creating an inclusive environment, including the most recent remodels of two centers. The result was inviting spaces for customers, staff workstations were reorganized to be more available to assist customers. Training rooms were designed to be highly mobile allowing numerous formats that accommodate both learning designs and the needs of individuals.

Upon completion of the remodels, Whatcom and Whidbey both hosted Open House events to partners and the public to familiarize agency staff and the general public about WorkSource services and programs.

Expanded workshop offerings.

The LWDB will continue to assess need and demand for service options. Spanish instructed workshop offerings have expanded to four: Resume Writing, Skills Discovery, Preparing for Interviews, and Search Smart.

WorkSource cocreated the Fresh Start workshop materials in collaboration with three community and technical colleges, the Northwest Indian College, Goodwill, and Community Action of Skagit County for delivery in any/each of those locations, mitigating the frequency with which services to job seekers with conviction history are eliminated due to staffing or budget reductions.

Career Course is an engagement session to both the IB programs and to the WorkSource Center services. This workshop was developed utilizing motivational interviewing and human centered design principles. Absent is the jargon outlining barriers or eligibility requirements.

Itinerant Desk.

In order to increase access to system partner services, the itinerant desk was piloted in Whatcom in 2018 and expanded to Whidbey and Skagit the following year. The itinerant desk is a specific space in or near the resource center where customers can access, on a

predictable schedule, any of the WIOA mandated employment and training programs as well as some voluntary programs. The partner program representative is responsible for accurately maintaining its calendar on DAWN. This ensures that staff can accurately refer customers to a staff while onsite. Staffing of partner services is marketed to jobseekers through the WorkSourceWA calendar of events.

Professional Development

Workforce Professionals represent the diversity we serve. Nearly all the 14 targeted populations outlined in WIOA are employed as professionals providing services to job seekers and business. We capitalize on staff insights, and knowledge is shared during the Center Use meetings that occur twice per month at each center. This meeting time and space provides opportunity to incorporate unique views into providing services that our customers value. It also provides opportunity to have shared learning experiences, thus blurring the lines between partner organizations and promoting service integration.

In order to effectively serve *any* customer group, training includes foundational aspects for the profession. Staff are introduced to the [12 Competencies for Workforce Professionals](#) (located on DAWN). Training highlights include:

- The Career Development Process
- Creating Accessible Documents
- Customer Service Principles
- Motivational Interviewing
- Effective communications
- Introduction to Assistive Technology (with hands on demonstration)
- Human Centered Design
- ADA building blocks (self-paced, web-based instruction)
- Disability Etiquette
- Gender Identity
- Equal Opportunity
- De-escalation techniques

Accountability

The ability to collect data, analyze to assess performance and effectiveness, and to share that information system wide are essential to improving system performance. The current MIS system restricts our ability to perform this type of analysis. While staff collect and input data, the ability to mine the data or generate meaningful reports currently does not exist. This will be a focus area when the ability to mine reliable data for reporting from the state MIS system becomes available. The LWDB deploys other strategies for collecting data to analyze the system and services.

- English and Spanish job seeker and business comment card are made available online, embedded as a link in emails, and provided in a hard copy version. Results are compiled and analyzed quarterly and are posted in the centers and provided to staff. This data contains a specific question regarding ease of access.
- Exit surveys are conducted annually at each Center where 100% of individuals visiting the center are asked to complete a customer satisfaction survey.

- During the Equal Opportunity Center reviews, job seekers are interviewed with specific probes regarding feeling welcomed, the person's view of accessibility, and the quality of services.
- Focus groups are scheduled for 2020 for Business, job seekers, and partnership staff.

SECTION IV

PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY

The Northwest Area's performance accountability system is consistent with the accountability provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) as defined by the State and the Department of Labor's regulations and guidelines. The Council relies on the information collected and reported through the two primary sources:

- Statewide management information systems
- The data and post-program outcomes collected and reported by the state Workforce Board and the Employment Security Department to satisfy the federal WIOA Common Indicators requirement.

The Council also analyzes and applies the results of its continuous quality improvement methods, which include performance data, customer flow data, customer surveys, comment cards, and focus groups.

The purposes of the performance review and accountability system are to improve performance; provide quality and effective services to customers; and assist the Council in overseeing the one-stop (WorkSource) system programs, including WIOA Title IB programs. The Council carries out its performance accountability responsibilities on a regular and timely basis through its Quality Assurance Committee. The Quality Assurance Committee receives and reviews local WIOA levels of performance on federal Common Indicators. This committee is responsible for reviewing the performance information provided by the state Workforce Board, Employment Security Department, WIOA Core Program partners, as well as data collected by the Council either through MIS or its continuous quality improvement processes. The Council then incorporates the findings and conclusions of these efforts in its strategic planning, initiating timely and effective performance-based consequences that may include incentives, improvement plans, or sanctions.

Northwest Workforce Council was able to review the performance of WIOA Title IB and Title III programs throughout its strategic planning process to assist in determining strategic goals and strategies for the workforce development system. WIOA Title II and Title IV programs have not been able to report performance data at the Regional level to date, only annual state level data are available. To improve performance, meet customer needs and develop a world class workforce, it has set goals and strategies that include skills standards, competency attainment, system integration, lifelong learning, and a commitment to continuous quality improvement.

The Council believes its strategies will strengthen the services, improve outcome performance and develop the necessary skill level needed by workers and the employers in today's work environment. The Council will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies in relation to local labor market needs, demographics of the current and emerging workforce, the outcomes achieved by the participants, and customer feedback. The Council will, if necessary, revise its strategies if the labor market needs, performance or customer feedback determines an expansion or change is necessary

The Council recognizes the value and benefit of management indicators to track and predict performance and works closely with its partners to track and report common measures across the four core WIOA workforce development programs. The Council's Quality Assurance Committee has continually refined its Northwest Workforce System Quarterly Performance Report to improve its usefulness as a performance oversight tool. The report includes measures of importance to the Council and the one stop system which include:

- DOL federal common measure performance of programs operated by WorkSource Northwest partner organizations
- WIOA training investment
- WIOA fiscal summary
- Competitive workforce grants and awards by key sector
- One stop customer flow
- Business and job seeker satisfaction
- Unemployment rates, and other significant workforce system issues or accomplishments of the quarter.

The report provides timely insight into performance attainment and aids the Council in its oversight role to ensure the region's programs meet performance goals.

The Council has developed a comprehensive tracking system for WIOA Title 1B performance for Youth, Adult, and Dislocated Worker programs. The Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs are designed to meet the Common Performance Measures with entry into employment 2nd and 4th quarter, earnings, skill gains, and credentials. Employer measures are under development.

WorkSource Northwest staff work actively with secondary and post-secondary vocation education programs to enhance all partners' performance on State core and common measures. At the post-secondary level, the WorkSource staff actively engage with the local colleges' Worker Retraining staff to coordinate resources and services to dislocated workers, increasing retention in training and employment outcomes after training completion. NWC coordinates with the State Opportunity Grant program which supports low income adults to train for high-wage, high-demand careers. Staff meet and identify individual students that need additional assistance and provide resources and services that help the student complete their training program past the point of Opportunity Grant support.

The State's Workforce Board establishes criteria and performance levels and maintains the system that reports training services provider eligibility and performance. This information provides useful baseline data for reviewing the performance of other workforce development programs.

Continuous Quality Improvement in WorkSource Operations

Northwest Workforce Council, with agreement of the chief local elected official and in accordance with its WIOA mandate, designates and certifies one-stop Career Center operators and those sites wishing to become, or remain, a part of the WorkSource-Northwest one-stop system. The Council is authorized to; 1) approve; 2) approve provisionally with a required plan of action to address deficient areas; 3) or deny an application. A technical assistance guide is sent that identifies both strengths and opportunities for improvement. Subsequent applications are reviewed to assure the Council's recommendations have been addressed and the expected quality system continues to mature in sophistication and deployment. Certification is for a three-year term. The certification process is managed by the Quality Assurance Committee's Certification Team, whose membership consists of representatives from organized labor and private industry. The full Council membership acts upon the Quality Assurance Committee's recommendations. In 2017, the Certification Team members conducted a review and completed an improvement cycle of the Council's certification materials and process. The updated process and improved application materials were approved by the Council in December 2017.

Operators and the sites they operate must represent the highest standards of quality in the delivery of employment and training services. Any entity wishing certification must demonstrate processes, practices, and performance outcomes which meet or exceed a set of quality standards based upon the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award criteria:

Leadership

A commitment to excellence in the WorkSource system is modeled and shaped by strong public and private leadership. The Council provides the workforce development system with effective private-sector led oversight of the regional system, while agency leaders work collaboratively to provide active and supportive management to achieve system goals. Senior leadership is directly involved in creating and sustaining common values, organizational directions, performance expectations, and customer focus. Leaders remove barriers which deter innovation and quality improvement.

Strategic Planning

WorkSource is managed in accordance with the Council's regional workforce and operations plans, WorkSource system policies, and regional protocols. The Council's plan focuses on ensuring quality and results. WorkSource Northwest one-stop operator(s) develop and use a Quality Plan that demonstrates to the Council strategies for achieving its Framework for Doing Business. The Quality Plan sets strategies and objectives for the next one to three years, while containing clear and measurable implementation steps in support of the Council's Regional Workforce Plan.

Customer Focus

The WorkSource system is based upon an unwavering focus on the needs of its business and job seeker customers. Services are shaped and assessed by attention to customer needs and associated adjustments to strategies, processes, and products. Customer satisfaction calls for the use of relevant data and information as an integral piece of the organization's performance. The Council requires the solicitation and applied use of customer feedback to inform continuous quality improvements.

Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management

In order to ensure that the WorkSource system is managed effectively, responds to customer needs, and produces results, consistent use of meaningful data is fundamental. Performance must be reviewed and analyzed, and that knowledge then used to lead performance improvement.

Workforce Focus

WorkSource sites are well-integrated, high-performance work organizations. Collaborating agencies reduce duplication of effort, empower staff to make decisions, and invest in staff development. Leadership ensures staff have the tools and skills they need to provide excellent service. Every staff member has the ability and authority to meet customer needs, either directly or, when appropriate, by helping the customer make the right connections to the expertise he or she seeks.

Operations Focus

WorkSource is a high quality, customer service enterprise. To ensure ongoing success, emphasis is placed on continuous improvement of key processes to reduce variability and rework and to improve performance. Agility is required to respond quickly, flexibly and effectively to changing requirements. Work systems and work processes are designed, managed, and improved to deliver customer value and achieve organizational success.

Results

In its oversight role of the workforce development system, Northwest Workforce Council reviews outcomes of the one-stop career centers and affiliated sites of WorkSource. Each

partner organization and program within this system contributes to the system's overall performance, while each is responsible to its funding source for program results and compliance. Program and organizational performance are one aspect of performance results. The Council is also interested in ensuring the collective system of one stop career centers and affiliated sites, known as WorkSource, contributes to the achievement of its strategic goals for the workforce development system.

Performance Based Accountability

Northwest Workforce Council is accountable for the results of WIOA Title I-B through a system of performance-based interventions, and shares in accountability for Title II Vocational Rehabilitation, Title III Wagner-Peyser and Title IV Adult and Family Literacy program results.

A workforce area is considered to not meet local performance measures when its performance, for individual indicators (measures) falls below 50% of the target for any one of the federal common performance indicators in a program year. Additionally, a workforce area is considered to not meet local performance measures when its performance falls below 90% of the target for the average score across each of the WIOA core programs or when its performance falls below 90% of the target for the average score of each WIOA core performance indicators across the WIOA core programs.

An area is at risk of failing a target if actual performance for any quarter (1st, 2nd, or 3rd) is less than the established programs' targets or if there is a significant decline in performance. In such a circumstance, the state will notify the Council's executive director and will schedule technical assistance with the appropriate local area staff.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Sector Partnership Framework

Attachment B: Regional Service Coordination Framework

Attachment C: Regional Economic Development Framework

Attachment D: Local Area Profile

Attachment E: Board Membership and Certification – Alternative Entity

Attachment F:

Attachment G:

Attachment H:

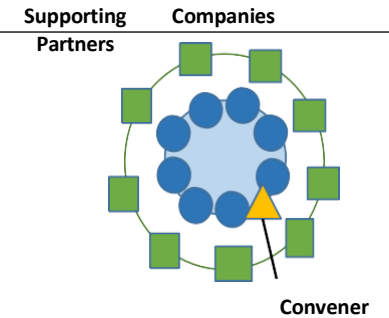
Attachment I: Performance Targets

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT A: SECTOR PARTNERSHIP FRAMEWORK

Washington Industry Engagement Framework or Sector Partnership Framework

Sector partnerships are **partnerships** of companies, from the same industry and in their natural labor market region, with education, workforce development, economic development and community organizations that focus on a set of key priority workforce and other issues identified by the target industry.



Phase I: Prepare your team

Goal: build buy-in & support

- Build a team of workforce, education and economic development leaders for ongoing joint decision-making
- Inventory current sector partnership or industry-targeted efforts
- Decide on initial roles & responsibilities – who has the credibility to lead a sector partnership, what support can partners commit to
- Commit to looking at LMI data together

Sample measures of progress

- Partners identified
- Meetings held
- Agreements developed
- Resources committed

Phase II: Investigate

Goal: determine target industries

- Determine growth sectors to investigate
- Ensure relevance for the region
- Evaluate against 10+ consideration relating to growth, relevance to economic development activities, and other key factors

Sample measures of progress

- Data provided
- Partners select key industries to explore

Phase III: Inventory and Analyze

Goal: build baseline knowledge of industry

- Conduct a baseline review of demand-side (employer) and supply-side (labor pool) data
- Analyze industry trends, review existing research
- Analyze data and develop a brief industry “report” or “snapshot” to start the engagement with employers
- Identify business champions to bring industry to the table

Sample measures of progress

- Industry “snapshot” or “report” ready for first meeting
- Industry champions identified
- Companies invited

Phase IV: Convene

Goal: build industry partnership, prioritize activities

- Prepare support team and set expectations for the meeting – business talking to business
- Hold event to find out what’s new in industry, growth opportunities, and related needs
- Ask industry to Identify and prioritize key issues
- Determine whether additional resources are needed

Sample measures of progress

- Plan for action developed
- Task forces identified
- Staff and chairs identified/assigned

Phase V: Act

Goal: Implement initiatives

- Develop Operational Plan
- Execute plans, monitor progress
- Provide status reports to partnership, task forces, stakeholders
- Identify road blocks and address them

Sample measures of progress

- Metrics specific to project identified and reported

Phase VI: Sustain and evolve

Goal: grow the partnership

- Identify next opportunities
- Start the process over again at the appropriate phase
- Grow the partnership

Sample measures of progress

- New projects identified
- New resources added

Evaluate



Adjust



Improve



Report



Tell Your Story



Directions: Complete the table below to describe current and future activities for at least the next two years for each sector partnership. Please start at the appropriate phase based on the current status of the sector partnership. Please complete one table per sector.

Attachment A: Sector Partnership

Sector to be served: Health and Allied Services

Check one: Regional Local

Phase	Timeline for each phase	Activities anticipated for each phase to be implemented. Please indicate how each LWDB will participate for sectors that will be served in a cross-regional plan.	Anticipated outcome(s) for each phase	Measure(s) of progress for each phase
Phase I: Prepare your team <i>Goal: build buy-in & support</i>				
Phase II: Investigate <i>Goal: determine target industries</i>				
Phase III: Inventory and Analyze <i>Goal: build baseline knowledge of industry</i>				
Phase IV: Convene <i>Goal: build industry partnership, prioritize activities</i>				
Phase V: Act <i>Goal: Implement initiatives</i>	July 2022	Re-introducing Nursing Assistant as high school vocational track option preparing seniors to received Nursing Assistant Certification and initiate a Health Career pathways plan.		

<p>Phase VI: Sustain and evolve Goal: grow the partnership</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Northwest Alliance for Health Care Services (NWAHCS) was established in 2000. This proven industry partnership table's work is diffused throughout the workforce development system based upon many years of working together to find and implement local solutions. Three healthcare industry leaders are members of the NWC board.</p> <p>We continue to monitor industry developments through contacts, data, various advisory tables, and board members for emerging needs. NWAHCS convenes as needed when issues, concerns or opportunities emerge that impact the region's industry employers or workforce.</p> <p>Most recent examples include convening a 2019 regional Healthcare integration Summit Northwest. NWAHCS lead by Northwest Workforce Council and Whatcom Community College, brought together a diverse group of stakeholders to identify the Workforce development needs resulting from integration of care. Over ninety attendees participated in the day-long working conference. The result of this conference supported the newly released Washington's Behavioral Health Workforce: Barriers and Solutions, Phase I Report and Recommendations commissioned by the Legislature.</p> <p>Continue to partner in the expansion of Whatcom Community College's (WCC) Chemical Dependency Program and Medical Assistant (MA) program, under their Dept of Commerce Skilled Worker Awareness grant, that are addressing health care workforce gaps and emergent needs. WCC has integrated behavioral health content into the program to meet the need for MAs trained for behavioral health integration. The NWC is actively participating in recruitment and direct student financial support utilizing local W IOA IB funds.</p>	<p>Pursuit of competitive and leveraged funding sources to address action plan items</p>	<p>Receipt of funding to impact action plan items</p> <p>Initiatives implemented</p>
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Attachment A: Sector Partnership

Sector to be served: Advanced Manufacturing

Check one: Regional Local

Phase	Timeline for each phase	Activities anticipated for each phase to be implemented. Please indicate how each LWDB will participate for sectors that will be served in a cross-regional plan.	Anticipated outcome(s) for each phase	Measure(s) of progress for each phase
Phase I: Prepare your team <i>Goal: build buy-in & support</i>				
Phase II: Investigate <i>Goal: determine target industries</i>				
Phase III: Inventory and Analyze <i>Goal: build baseline knowledge of industry</i>	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review multi-region, national, and industry-produced reports and data to ensure workforce strategies are well aligned and responsive to industry needs. 	Continue to build industry knowledge and emergent needs	Modify action plans/strategies as warranted
Phase IV: Convene <i>Goal: build industry partnership, prioritize activities</i>	As scheduled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sustain NWC board initiative to increase opportunities and access to apprenticeship programs ▪ Maintain successful Career Connect Career Connected Learning and Apprenticeship Expansion activities that built expanded industry, business, economic development and educational partnerships ▪ Maintain the Northwest Career Connect Regional Network to sustain Career Connected initiatives and continue cross-regional career connect initiative with the common sector identification of manufacturing, construction and health care. ▪ Participate in multi-region, convening of advanced manufacturing tables ▪ Continue engagement with Center of Excellence for Marine Manufacturing & Technology 	Continue to build industry knowledge and emergent needs	Build industry and service provider networks

<p>Phase V: Act <i>Goal: Implement initiatives</i></p>	<p>Spring 2020; 2021: & ongoing</p> <p>Spring 2020 and ongoing</p> <p>July2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue Washington Apprenticeship Vocational Education (WAVE) Tour for high school students and young adults from a cross-regional five (5) county area that has been serving 350 young adults from the NW #189 Educational Service District. ▪ Support Aerospace Joint Apprenticeship Committee (AJAC) Youth Registered Apprenticeship program in Whatcom County with local employers, Bellingham Technical College and area school districts. BTC ▪ Maintain partnership with Nichols Brothers Boat Builders and continuing expansion of apprenticeship in Marine Manufacturing, sustaining 44% increase. ▪ Continue in veteran apprenticeship fair ▪ Conduct Third Ironworkers Pre-apprenticeship class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Young adults & veterans introduced to trades and career opportunities ▪ Entry workers prepared with industry-recognized certifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of young adults served ▪ Participation rates and new apprenticeship enrollments ▪ Employers satisfied with worker preparation & availability of workforce
<p>Phase VI: Sustain and evolve <i>Goal: grow the partnership</i></p>	<p>Spring-Summer 2020 & ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote and support Incumbent Worker Training ▪ Identify and develop new initiatives as warranted 	<p>Identify and/or direct resources to meet industry identified needs</p>	<p>Project-specific resources attained and deployed</p>

Attachment A: Sector Partnership

Sector to be served: Construction

Check one: Regional Local

Phase	Timeline for each phase	Activities anticipated for each phase to be implemented. Please indicate how each LWDB will participate for sectors that will be served in a cross-regional plan.	Anticipated outcome(s) for each phase	Measure(s) of progress for each phase
Phase I: Prepare your team <i>Goal: build buy-in & support</i>				
Phase II: Investigate <i>Goal: determine target industries</i>				
Phase III: Inventory and Analyze <i>Goal: build baseline knowledge of industry</i>		Identified the basic and introductory skill needs of this industry closely parallel those of advanced manufacturing with many similar skill domains and worker competency requirements. Survey conducted for NWC by WWU's Center for Economic & Business Research provided data to understand emergent needs specific to construction.	Continued knowledge of industry's workforce needs	Relevant data obtained and analyzed for new service opportunities
Phase IV: Convene <i>Goal: build industry partnership, prioritize activities</i>		Six NWC Board members represent a cross section of construction, fabrication or manufacturing businesses, trades, and labor. We also communicate with building industry associations, apprenticeship programs, and organized labor to identify and address emerging workforce needs.	Increased engagement	At least 1 workforce-relevant industry event delivered or attended
Phase V: Act <i>Goal: Implement initiatives</i>	Annually and ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continuation of Washington Apprenticeship Vocational Education (WAVE) Tour for high school young adults ▪ Continued support of annual veteran apprenticeship fair ▪ Meet Apprenticeship and workforce needs of sector by NWC support for the following apprenticeship career pathway and pipeline initiatives: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Iron Workers Pre-apprenticeship class offered annually as labor market dictates 2. Carpenter Pre-apprenticeship class offering annually as labor market dictates 3. Construction Trades Rotational Pre-apprenticeship class 	<p>Young adults & veterans introduced to trades and career opportunities</p> <p>Entry workers prepared with skills and industry-recognized certifications</p>	<p>Participation rates & new apprenticeships</p> <p>Employers satisfied with worker preparation & availability</p>

Phase VI: Sustain and evolve <i>Goal: grow the partnership</i>	December 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ NWC will support the new Masonry Trades Pre-apprenticeship class by underwriting a class for the northwest.▪ Promote and support Incumbent Worker Training▪ Identify and develop new initiatives as warranted		
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Attachment A: Cross-Regional Sector Strategy

Sector to be served: Career Connected Learning

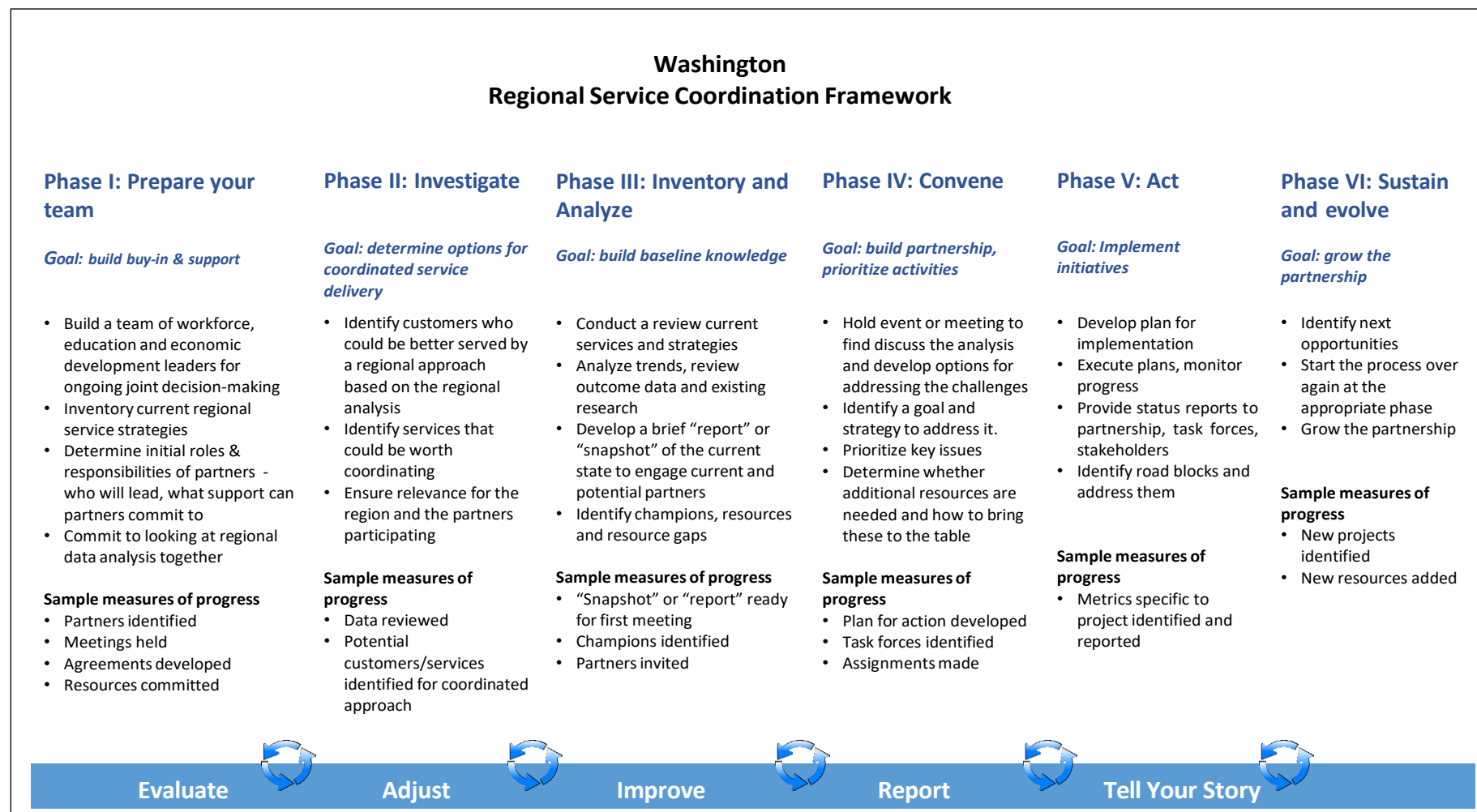
Check one: Regional

Local

Phase	Timeline for each phase	Activities anticipated for each phase to be implemented. Please indicate how each LWDB will participate in a cross-regional plan.	Anticipated outcome(s) for each phase	Measure(s) of progress for each
Phase I: Prepare your team <i>Goal: build buy-in & support</i>	In-process	Convene core working group, consisting of delegates of NW Workforce Council, Workforce Snohomish, NWESD 189, Skagit STEM Network, Snohomish STEM Network Outreach to intermediaries operating in region – or potentially expand to region.	Functional work plan developed Coordinated efforts to maximize impact	Meetings occur on a quarterly basis or more frequently as needed
Phase II: Investigate <i>Goal: determine options for coordinated service deliver</i>	In-process	Forge connections between regional initiatives and stakeholders Assessment of status of CCL activities and interests in region Assess organizational capacities, limitations and alignment of support services Identify measures/data to be tracked Identify support requirements for intermediary success Identify support requirements for School Districts and post-secondary institutions in region to support success (Career Launch)	Identification of regional CCL initiatives, stakeholders	Communication between regional efforts/stakeholders improved
Phase III: Inventory and Analyze <i>Goal: build baseline knowledge</i>	In-process – June 30, 2021	Contribute to statewide/region inventory of potential Career Launch Programs Ongoing assessment of WA STEM data on CCL activities, student engagement, and state databases and local tracking. Establish framework for regional strategy to increase CCL per CCW goals and local performance measures	Regional strategy formulated and disseminated Inventories (online) are useful and accessible.	Information provided to regional board/working groups to inform strategy and focus efforts
	In-process- June 30, 2021	Convene regional board/working group to solicit feedback on strategy and priorities.	Develop work plan to	Publication of plan, updates

		Solicit feedback broadly from regional stakeholders to define and re-define priorities, assess progress and impact pertaining to regional strategy.	implement regional strategy Metrics and data sources identified and monitored in support of continuous improvement.	provided utilizing data and narratives highlighting impact.
Phase V: Act Goal: Implement initiatives	April 2020 – June 30, 2021	Support and engage in regional and local events that promote or support CCL programs and activities to parents, students, and business Disseminate information on CCL that improves understanding among target populations and underserved geographic areas Increase business engagement and support of CCL activities/programs	CCL activities and programs are expanded in underserved areas/populations Partnerships expanded and communications improved to improve alignment with business needs	Measurable progress towards CCL goals
Phase VI: Sustain and evolve Goal: grow the partnership	TBD	Determine sustainability plan for regional board engagement through existing governance structures. Exploration and evaluation of formal network and ability to institutionalize and sustain coordinated effort.	Integration of coordinating network into partner organizations	ROI/value of regional coordination is evident

ATTACHMENT B: REGIONAL SERVICE COORDINATION FRAMEWORK



Directions: Complete the table below to describe current and future activities for at least the next two years for any service strategies to be coordinated across the region. Please start at the appropriate phase based on the current status of the regional. The completed table will serve as the Regional Cooperative Service Delivery Agreement required by Section 107(d) (11) once the plan is approved.

Attachment B: Regional Cooperative Service Delivery Agreement

Phase	Timeline for each phase	Activities anticipated for each phase to be implemented. Please indicate how each LWDB will participate in a cross-regional plan.	Anticipated outcome(s) for each phase	Measure(s) of progress for each phase
Phase I: Prepare your team Goal: build buy-in & support	Monthly By December 2021	<p>The partnership in NWWA is mature. There are monthly meetings of all MOU partners. This team is called the Management Team (MT) and it is responsible for creating, maintaining, holding partners accountable, and continuously improving systematic processes and strategies across all partners that help to integrate service delivery.</p> <p>Two current priorities fit into this goal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase methods for staff recognition across the partnership • Develop a method to recognize employers who engage in the system 	Priority actions are complete Methods executed	An Action Plan that is developed/ reviewed annually.
Phase II: Investigate Goal: determine options for coordinated service deliver	By December 2020	The MT chartered a Customer Flow Workgroup, made up of partner staff. They are chartered to design and pilot a method to ensure all customers get information about all services offered throughout the system; ensure staff have access to all system assets to present to customers; and help customers navigate the system to ensure a warm handoff.	A new customer flow approach has been adopted system wide that meets the objectives	Monthly MT meeting reviews of progress.
Phase III: Inventory and Analyze Goal: build baseline knowledge	By December 2020 and ongoing By July 2020	<p>Develop and implement a robust method of collecting customer satisfaction data to increase knowledge of customer expectations. Refine the data analysis process for the customer comment cards already in use. Implement a focus group strategy to collect data from jobseekers, employers and partners. Implement common workshop evaluations across the partnership.</p> <p>Develop a robust orientation of the Partnership, the governance structure and the approach to integrated service delivery for all staff across the partnership</p>	Comment cards – more analytical approach to the data reports Focus Groups – conduct 1 for each group annually. Workshop evaluations - implemented and data used to make improvements Orientation workshop in use for onboarding all new staff	Monthly MT meeting reviews of progress.

Phase IV: Convene Goal: build partnership, prioritize activities		See Phase 1		
Phase V: Act Goal: Implement initiatives	2021	The Management Team creates a 2-year action plan, reviewed annually. The action plan is based on the charter for the team with regard to what needs to be accomplished, the local certification process and feedback received from the WDC's Certification Committee, as well as recommendations from the WDC's Access Review Committee. Priorities are identified for completion within each year.	Priority actions are complete	Monthly MT meeting reviews of progress.
Phase VI: Sustain and evolve Goal: grow the partnership	Over the 2-year period	Develop succession planning approach with MT members and organizations. Maintain a knowledge management system through DAWN and the Buddy system.	Regularly implemented	Partner feedback

ATTACHMENT C: REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Washington Regional Economic Development Framework

Phase I: Prepare your team

Goal: build buy-in & support

- Build a team of workforce, education leaders for ongoing joint decision-making
- Inventory current regional economic development organizations and strategies
- Determine initial roles & responsibilities of partners - who will lead, what support can partners commit to
- Commit to looking at regional data analysis and economic development plans together

Sample measures of progress

- Partners identified
- Meetings held
- Agreements developed
- Resources committed

Phase II: Investigate

Goal: determine options for coordination with economic development

- Identify opportunities for collaboration based on regional analysis
- Identify services and strategies that could support economic development goals
- Ensure relevance for the region and the partners participating

Sample measures of progress

- Data reviewed
- Potential opportunities for coordinated approach identified

Phase III: Inventory and Analyze

Goal: build baseline knowledge

- Analyze trends, review outcome data and existing research
- Identify champions, resources and resource gaps
- Identify topics for discussion
- Identify what information is needed to engage

Sample measures of progress

- “Snapshot” or “report” ready for first meeting
- Champions identified
- Partners invited

Phase IV: Convene

Goal: build partnership, prioritize activities

- Hold event or meeting to discuss the analysis and develop options for addressing the challenges
- Identify a goal and strategy to address it.
- Prioritize key issues
- Determine whether additional resources are needed and how to bring these to the table

Sample measures of progress

- Plan for action developed
- Task forces identified
- Assignments made

Phase V: Act

Goal: Implement initiatives

- Develop implementation strategies
- Execute plans, monitor progress
- Provide status reports to partnership, task forces, stakeholders
- Identify road blocks and address them

Sample measures of progress

- Metrics specific to project identified and reported

Phase VI: Sustain and evolve

Goal: grow the partnership

- Identify next opportunities
- Start the process over again at the appropriate phase
- Grow the partnership

Sample measures of progress

- New projects identified
- New resources added

Evaluate



Adjust



Improve



Report



Tell Your Story



Directions: Complete the table below to describe current and future activities for at least the next two years regarding regional coordination with economic development. Please start at the appropriate phase based on the current status of the regional.

Attachment C: Regional Economic Development Coordination Plan

Phase	Timeline for each phase	Activities anticipated for each phase to be implemented. Please indicate how each LWDB will participate in a cross-regional plan.	Anticipated outcome(s) for each phase	Measure(s) of progress for each phase
Phase I: Prepare your team <i>Goal: build buy-in & support</i>				
Phase II: Investigate <i>Goal: determine options for coordinated service deliver</i>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Dec 2020</p>	<p>The Northwest workforce and economic development entities are well coordinated and working on approaches to grow and sustain the regional economy.</p> <p>Expand capacity of economic development entities to promote WorkSource services and resources, including OJT and incumbent worker</p>	<p>Continue to identify opportunities for collaboration.</p> <p>Businesses have more information about WorkSource resources for their workforce needs</p>	<p>New collaborations/coordinated approaches achieved.</p> <p>Increase Business registrations and account use in WorkSourceWA and increased OJT and incumbent worker contracts</p>
Phase III: Inventory and Analyze <i>Goal: build baseline knowledge</i>	Ongoing	The collection, analysis, and dissemination of market intelligence are a constant pursuit. Taken as a whole, the workforce and economic development systems produce a plethora of valuable data and knowledge befitting and benefiting each entity, without the onerous cost of conducting independent research to achieve the same result.	Find ways to better share data-based knowledge.	Freely accessible economic and labor force data, reports, and studies.
Phase IV: Convene <i>Goal: build partnership, prioritize activities</i>	Ongoing	<p>Each of the counties in the region approaches economic development in a manner that is appropriate for and scaled to, its community and economy. Partnerships include everything from side by side offices to board representation.</p> <p>Coordinate support for economic development organizations initiatives and forums to promote the Maritime Cluster, one of NWC's key industry sectors, marine manufacturing.</p>	Participate in convened tables and convene new meetings or tables on emergent topics or need.	The region has appropriate forums for interested parties and stakeholders to conduct the business of economic development.

Phase V: Act Goal: Implement initiatives	Ongoing	Multiple action plans, strategies, and reporting structures exist across the region.	Track those action items that most directly relate to workforce issues.	Annual report to the board of the region's economic development activities most closely associated with workforce issues.
Phase VI: Sustain and evolve Goal: grow the partnership	Ongoing	Identify new opportunities for stakeholder involvement in projects and participation at formal tables.	Identify new opportunities for participation.	Expanded participation, resources, and shared knowledge.

ATTACHMENT D: LOCAL AREA PROFILE

Please complete the following three sections for each Local Area in the Region and submit the information as part of the plan.

1. Local One-Stop System

List all comprehensive, affiliate, and connection one-stop sites in the local area, along with the site operator. If the operator is a partnership, list all entities comprising the partnership.

Site	Type of Site (Comprehensive, Affiliate, or Connection)	Site Operator(s)
WorkSource Whatcom	Comprehensive	Strumpf Associates
WorkSource Skagit	Comprehensive	Strumpf Associates
WorkSource Whidbey	Comprehensive	Strumpf Associates
San Juan Career Center	Career Center (uncertified)	Northwest Workforce Council

2. WIOA Title I Service Providers

Dislocated Worker Program List all current and potential service providers in the area	Indicate service(s) provided by each			WIOA funded?
	Basic	Individualized	Training	
Northwest Workforce Council	X	X		X
NW Ironworkers			X	X
NW Carpenters Institute			X	X
Apprenticeship & Non-traditional Employment for Women (ANEW)			X	X
Western Washington Masonry Trades			X	X
Vocational Education Provider & Employers			X	X
Bellingham Technical College (Worker Retraining)			X	
Whatcom Community College (Worker Retraining)			X	
Skagit Valley College (Worker Retraining)			X	
Goodwill			X	X
Community Action Skagit County			X	

Comments regarding the adequacy and quality of Dislocated Worker Services available:

For the past four years, the results of Dislocated Worker Basic and Individualized Services provided by Northwest Workforce Council have met or exceeded the core WIOA performance indicator targets. NWC contracts for projects and for individualized training with Community and Technical Colleges, private proprietary training organizations and with a number of Joint Apprenticeship Training Committees for pre-apprenticeship training, expanding access for dislocated workers to apprenticeship training. NWC also utilizes employers for On-the-Job (OJT) and Incumbent Worker Training. All have met or exceeded the core WIOA performance indicator targets.

Adult Program List all current and potential service providers in the area	Indicate service(s) provided by each			WIOA funded?	
	Basic	Individualized	Training		

Northwest Workforce Council		X	X		X
NW Ironworkers				X	X
NW Carpenters Institute				X	X
Western Washington Masonry Trades				X	X
Apprenticeship & Non-traditional Employment for Women (ANEW)				X	X
Vocational Education Provider & Employers				X	
Bellingham Technical College (Worker Retraining)				X	
Whatcom Community College (Worker Retraining)				X	
Skagit Valley College (Worker Retraining)		X	X		
Goodwill		X	X		
AARP		X	X		
DVR		X	X		
Community Action Skagit County		X			

Comments regarding the adequacy and quality of Adult Services available:

For the past four years, the results of Adult Basic and Individualized Services provided by Northwest Workforce Council have met or exceeded the core WIOA performance indicator targets. NWC contracts for projects and for individualized training with Community and Technical Colleges, private proprietary training organizations and with a number of Joint Apprenticeship Training Committees for pre-apprenticeship training, expanding access for adults to apprenticeship training. NWC also utilizes employers for On-the-Job (OJT) and Incumbent Worker Training. All have met or exceeded the core WIOA performance indicator targets. Broad outreach within Northwest Region communities and agencies has expanded access to services to a diverse young adult population, including serving 29% non-white; 15% Hispanic, 21% participants with disabilities and 17% are ex-offenders.

Youth Program List all current and potential service providers in the area	Indicate service(s) provided by each			WIOA funded?	Services for youth with disabilities?
	Basic	Individualized	Training		
Northwest Workforce Council	X	X	X	X	X
NW Ironworkers			X	X	X
NW Carpenters Institute			X	X	X
Western Washington Masonry Trades			X	X	X
Apprenticeship & Non-traditional Employment for Women (ANEW)			X	X	X
Vocational Education Provider & Employers			X	X	X
Lummi Indian Business Council	X	X	X	X	X
Northwest Youth Services	X	X	X		X
Goodwill	X	X			X
DVR	X	X	X	X	X
Community Action Skagit County		X			X
Cascade Job Corps Center	X	X	X	X	X

Comments regarding the adequacy and quality of Youth Services available:

For the past four years, the results of comprehensive Youth Services provided by Northwest Workforce Council have met or exceeded the core WIOA performance indicator targets. NWC contracts for projects and for individualized training with Community and Technical Colleges, private proprietary training organizations, and with a number of Joint Apprenticeship Training Committees for pre-apprenticeship training, expanding access for youth to apprenticeship training. NWC also utilizes employers for On-the-Job Training (OJT). All have met or exceeded the core WIOA performance indicator targets. Broad outreach within Northwest Region communities and agencies has expanded access to services to a diverse young adult population, including serving 28% non-white, 28% Hispanic and 44% youth with disabilities. Homeless youth are 15% of those served and youth ex-offenders are 17%. Cascade Job Corps offers comprehensive services for young adults 16-24 who can benefit from having a supportive residential setting.

ATTACHMENT E BOARD MEMBERSHIP AND CERTIFICATION – ALTERNATIVE ENTITY

**COMMUNITY LEADERS APPOINTED TO SERVE ON THE
NORTHWEST WORKFORCE COUNCIL
AS OF JULY 1, 2020**

The table should identify how an alternative entity serving as a Local Workforce Development Board is substantially similar to the local entity described in WIOA Section 107(b)(2), by indication membership in each of the 4 categories listed above.

Representatives of business with substantial employment opportunities in the local area. (At least three representative in this subcategory). Total number of business seats (NWC): 14		
Council Member Name and Title Business Name, Address, Phone, Fax, and E-Mail	Type of Business/Industry	Name of local business organization or business trade association that nominated the member for the purpose of serving on the WDC
Delbert N. McAlpine, Chief Financial Officer All American Marine, Inc. 200 Harris Ave. Bellingham, WA 98225 U.S.A. (360) 647-7602 X3002 dmcalpine@allamericanmarine.com	Manufacturing, Boat Building	Bellingham-Whatcom Economic Development Council
Terry Corrigan, Vice-President Haskell Corporation PO Box 917, Bellingham, WA 98227 360-734-1200 ext. 3214 / fax 360-734-5538 tcorrigan@haskellcorp.com	Construction, Industrial	Bellingham/Whatcom Chamber of Commerce
Tonja Myers, Administrator Christian Health Care Center 855 Aaron Drive Lynden, WA 98264 360.354.4434; fax 360.354.3768 tamyers@chccllynden.org	Health, Long Term Care	Bellingham/Whatcom Chamber of Commerce

Kevin Corrigan, Director of Human Resources Nichols Brothers Boat Builders 5400 South Cameron Rd Freeland WA 98249 KevinC@nicholsboats.com	Manufacturing Boat Building	Island County Economic Development Association
Brian Ivie, CEO Skagit Regional Health 300 Hospital Parkway Mt. Vernon WA 98274 360.814.5840 bivie@skagitregionalhealth.org	Health, Acute Care	Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County
James Tangaro, General Manager Andeavor 10200 March Point Road P.O. Box 700 Anacortes, WA 98221 360-293-9122 James.d.tangaro@tsocorp.com	Petroleum Products Manufacturing	Economic Development Association of Skagit County
Shawna Unger, Sr Director Human Resources Peace Health St. Joseph Medical Center 2901 Squalicum Parkway, Bellingham, WA 98225 360-756-6896 sunger@peacehealth.org	Health, Acute Care	Bellingham/Whatcom Chamber of Commerce

Representatives of small business employing 4 to 50 employees. (At least three representatives in this subcategory)		
Council Member Name and Title	Type of Business/Industry	Name of local business organization or business trade association that nominated the member for the purpose of serving on the WDC
Business Name, Address, Phone, Fax, and E-Mail		
Robin Van Hying, Owner Cornerstone Healthcare Consulting & Training Company, Inc. P.O. Box 519 Friday Harbor WA 98250 Phone: (360) 378- 6754 Fax: (510) 280-9023 Cell: (360) 317-4529	Health Care Training	San Juan County Economic Development Association

<p>Robin Plume, Owner GR Plume Company 1373 W. Smith Road #A-1 Ferndale, WA 98284 360-384-2800 / fax 384-0335 rwplume@grplume.com</p>	<p>Structural Wood Product Manufacturing</p>	<p>Bellingham/Whatcom Chamber of Commerce</p>
<p>Mark Vorobik President, EDCO Inc. 14508 Ovenell Road, Mount Vernon, WA 98273 360-424-6600 mark@edcoonline.com</p>	<p>Manufacturing</p>	<p>Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County</p>
<p>Hart Hodges Waycross Investment Management Inc. 1326 Commercial Street PO Box 1618 Bellingham, WA 98227 (360) 671-0148 waycross@waycross.com</p>	<p>Economic research and development services</p>	<p>Bellingham/Whatcom Chamber of Commerce</p>
<p>Other business members</p>		
<p>Council Member Name and Title Business Name, Address, Phone, Fax, and E-Mail</p>		<p>Name of local business organization or business trade association that nominated the member for the purpose of serving on the WDC</p>
<p>Nomination in Process with Island County Commissioners in accordance with their policy and procedures for appointing Board members</p>		
<p>Sharon Sappington, Executive Director Island County Economic Development Council PO Box 279 Coupeville, WA 982976 360-678-6889 Fax 678-2976 ssappington@edcislandcounty.org</p>	<p>Business Association</p>	<p>Island County Economic Development Association</p>
<p>Nomination in Process with Skagit County Commissioners in accordance with their policy and procedures for appointing Board members</p>		

Labor (Three labor representatives)	
Council Member Name and Title	Name of Central Labor Council that nominated the member for the purpose of serving on the WDC
Labor Organization Name, Address, Phone, Fax, and E-Mail	
Michele Stelovich, Vice President Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO 314 First Avenue West, Seattle, WA, 98119 425-931-6522 mstelovich@hotmail.com	Northwest Central Labor Council
Tammie O'Dell 4936 Ida Drive Sedro Woolley, WA 98284 (360) 770-3747 tametation@hotmail.com	Northwest Central Labor Council
Lori Province, WIOA Labor Liaison Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO 314 First Avenue West, Seattle, WA, 98119 (206) 281-8901 lprovince50@gmail.com	Northwest Central Labor Council

Education Members may include representatives of local educational entities, including representatives of local educational agencies, local school boards, entities providing adult education and literacy activities, and postsecondary educational institutions including community and technical colleges.	
Members representing postsecondary education. (Two representatives in this subcategory)	
Council Member Name and Title Educational Organization Name, Address, Phone, Fax, and E-Mail	Name of educational entity that nominated the member
Kathi Hiyane-Brown, President Whatcom Community College 237 W Kellogg Rd (Laidlaw Center 142) Bellingham, WA 98226 360.383.3330 presoffice@whatcom.edu	Whatcom County Executive's Office
Thomas Keegan, President Skagit Valley College 2405 E. College Way Mount Vernon, WA 98273 360.416.7997 fax 360.416.7773 Thomas.Keegan@skagit.edu	Skagit Valley College
Members representing K-12. (Two representatives in this subcategory)	
Council Member Name and Title Educational Organization Name, Address, Phone, Fax, and E-Mail	Name of educational entity that nominated the member
Alerd Johnson, Board of Directors Oak Harbor Educational Foundation (Oak Harbor School District) PO Box 1801 Oak Harbor, WA 98277 (360) 293-7953 alerdjohnson@hotmail.com	Oak Harbor School District
Whatcom County Seat - Nomination in Process with Educational Service District #189	ESD #189/OSPI

<i>State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies</i> (One representative in this category)	
Council Members Name and Title Organization Name, Address, Phone, Fax, and E-Mail	
Carl Johnston, Supervisor Division of Vocational Rehabilitation DSHS Division of Vocational Rehabilitation 4101 Meridian Bellingham, WA 98226-5514 360-714-4129 johnsc@dshs.wa.gov	Director, DSHS Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.
<i>Public Assistance Agencies</i> (One representative in this category)	
Council Members Name and Title Organization Name, Address, Phone, Fax, and E-Mail	
Mike Riber, Administrator Department of Social and Health Services Bellingham Community Services Office Bellingham, WA 360-714-4004 Mike.Riber@dshs.wa.gov	CSO Administrator, DSHS Region 3
<i>Economic Development Agencies</i> (One representative in this category)	
Council Members Name and Title Organization Name, Address, Phone, Fax, and E-Mail	
John Sternlicht, Executive Director Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County 204 West Montgomery Mount Vernon, Washington 98273 360-336-6114 john@skagit.org	Economic Development Alliance of Skagit County

Community-Based Organizations

(Two representative in this category)

Organization Name and Address	
Nomination In Process with Island County Commissioners in accordance with their policy and procedures for appointing Board members	Island County CBOs
Greg Winter, CEO Opportunity Council 1419 Cornwall Ave 360.734.5121 greg_winter@oppco.org	Whatcom County CBOs

The Public Employment Service

(One representative in this category)

Council Members Name and Title	
Organization Name, Address, Phone, Fax, and E-Mail	
Jessica Barr Employment Security Department Northwest Regional Director 3201 Smith Avenue, Suite 413 Everett, WA 98201 425.308.4422 jbarr@esd.wa.gov	Employment Security Department

Evidence of Recruitment:

NWC is actively working in each of the three counties where vacancies exist to identify nominees and with Skagit and Island County Commissioners and the Whatcom County Executive to make appropriate appointments.

ATTACHMENT F

Regional/Local Workforce Plan Assurances Instructions

This section of the plan is a "check-the-box" table of assurance statements, including the legal reference(s) corresponding to each assurance. Note: Boxes can be electronically populated by double-clicking the check box and selecting "checked" as the default value.

By checking each assurance and signing and dating the certification page at the end of the Regional/Local Workforce Plan, the LWDB and local chief elected official(s) certify that (1) the information provided to the State in the following table is accurate, complete, and meets all legal and guidance requirements and (2) the local area meets all of the legal planning requirements outlined in WIOA law and regulations and in corresponding State guidance. By checking each box and signing the certification page, the LWDB and local chief elected official(s) also assure the State that supporting documentation is available for review upon request (e.g., state or federal compliance monitoring visits).

If a local board is unable to provide assurance for a specific requirement, it must promptly notify the staff contact in ESD's Employment System Administration and Policy Unit to provide the reason for non-compliance and describe specific actions and timetables for achieving compliance. Identified deficiencies within the assurances may result in additional technical assistance and/or a written corrective action request as part of the State's conditional approval of the Regional/Local Workforce Plan.

2020-2024 Regional/Local Workforce Plan Assurances

PY20 Regional/Local Workforce Plan Assurances		
<p><i>The State Workforce Board, acting as the Governor's designee for the review and approval of local workforce plans, has granted temporary flexibility to local boards in submitting their PY20 plans because of the COVID-19 emergency. Federal law, however, requires these plans be in place for local boards to receive PY20 formula grant funding, available July 1, 2020.</i></p> <p><i>ESD, in partnership with the State Workforce Board, is offering temporary flexibility to local boards who need to receive funds on July 1, but prior to the review of the approval of their PY20 plan. ESD can offer this flexibility on the condition that specific assurances and documents required by federal law are provided prior to the execution of PY20 formula grants.</i></p> <p><i>Please complete the form below and return the signed and dated copy via email to esdgpworkforceinitiatives@esd.wa.gov. By signing below, you attest to the best of your knowledge, that this set of assurances is complete and accurate, and is sufficient to meet federal requirements to receive WIOA PY20 formula funds.</i></p>		
Planning Process and Public Comment	References	X
1. The local board has processes and timelines, consistent with WIOA Section 108(d), to obtain input into the development of the local plan and provide the opportunity for comment by representatives of business, labor organizations, education, other key stakeholders, and the general public for a period that is no less than 30 days.	WIOA Sections 108(d); proposed 20 CFR 679.550(b)	N/A
2. The final local plan is available and accessible to the general public.	Proposed 20 CFR 679.550(b)(5)	N/A
3. The local board has established procedures to ensure public access (including people with disabilities) to board meetings and information regarding board activities, such as board membership and minutes.	WIOA Section 107(e); proposed 20 CFR 679.390 and 679.550	
Required Policies and Procedures	References	X
4. The local board makes publicly available any local requirements for the public workforce system, such as policies, including policies for the use of WIOA Title I funds.	Proposed 20 CFR 679.390	
5. The local board has established a written policy or procedure that identifies circumstances that might present conflict of interest for any local workforce investment board or entity that they represent, and provides for the resolution of conflicts.	WIOA Section 107(h); proposed 20 CFR 679.410(a)-(c); WIOA Title I Policy 5405; WIOA Title I Policy 5410	X
6. The local board has copies of memoranda of understanding between the local board and each one-stop partner concerning the operation of the one-stop delivery system in the local area, and has provided the State with the latest versions of its memoranda of understanding.	WIOA Section 121(c); proposed 20 CFR 678.500-510; WorkSource System Policy 1013	X
7. The local board has written policy or procedures that ensure one-stop operator agreements are reviewed and updated no less than once every three years.	WIOA Section 121(c)(v); WorkSource System Policy 1008 Revision 1	X

8. The local board has negotiated and reached agreement on local performance measures with the local chief elected official(s) and Governor.	WIOA Sections 107(d)(9) and 116(c); proposed 20 CFR 679.390(k) and 677.210(b)	X
9. The local board has procurement policies and procedures for selecting One-Stop operators, awarding contracts under WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker funding provisions, and awarding contracts for Youth service provision under WIOA Title I in accordance with applicable state and local laws, rules, and regulations, provided no conflict exists with WIOA.	WIOA Sections 121(d) and 123; proposed 20 CFR 678.600-615 and 681.400; WIOA Title I 5404; WIOA Title I Policy 5613	X
10. The local board has procedures for identifying and determining the eligibility of training providers and their programs to receive WIOA Title I individual training accounts and to train dislocated workers receiving additional unemployment insurance benefits via the state's Training Benefits Program.	WIOA Sections 107(d)(10), 122(b)(3), and 123; Proposed 20 CFR 679.370(l)- (m) and 680.410-430; WIOA Title I Policy 5611	X
11. The local board has written procedures for resolving grievances and complaints alleging violations of WIOA Title I regulations, grants, or other agreements under WIOA and written policies or procedures for assisting customers who express interest in filing complaints at any point of service, including, at a minimum, a requirement that all partners can identify appropriate staff contacts and refer customers to those contacts.	WIOA Section 181(c); proposed 20 CFR 683.600; WIOA Title I Policy 5410; WorkSource System Policy 1012, Revision 1	X
12. The local board has assurances from its one-stop operator that all one-stop centers and, as applicable, affiliate sites have front-end services consistent with the state's integrated front-end service policy and their local plan.	WorkSource System Policy 1010 Revision 1	X
13. The local board has established at least one comprehensive, full-service one-stop center and has a written process for the local Chief Elected Official and local board to determine that the center conforms to the definition therein.	WIOA Section 121(e)(2)(A); proposed 20 CFR 678.305; WIOA Title I Policy 5612	X
14. The local board provides to employers the basic business services outlined in WorkSource System Policy 1014.	WorkSource System Policy 1014	X
15. The local board has written processes or procedures and has identified standard assessment objectives and resources to support service delivery strategies at one-stop centers and, as applicable, affiliate sites.	WorkSource System Policies 1011 and 1016; WTECB State Assessment Policy	X
16. All partners in the local workforce and education system described in this plan ensure the physical, programmatic and communications accessibility of facilities, programs, services, technology and materials in one-stop centers for individuals with disabilities.	WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR parts 37.7-37.9; 20 CFR 652.8(j)	X
17. The local board ensures that outreach is provided to populations and sub-populations who can benefit from one-stop services.	WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR 37.42	X

18. The local board implements universal access to programs and activities to individuals through reasonable recruitment targeting, outreach efforts, assessments, service delivery, partner development, and numeric goals.	WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR 37.42	X
19. The local board complies with the nondiscrimination provisions of Section 188, and assures that Methods of Administration were developed and implemented.	WIOA Section 188; 29 CFR 37.54(a)(1); WIOA Policy 5402, Revision 1; WorkSource System Policy 1012, Revision 1	X
20. The local board collects and maintains data necessary to show compliance with nondiscrimination provisions of Section 188.	WIOA Section 185; 29 CFR 37.37; WIOA Policy 5402, Revision 1; WorkSource System Policy 1012, Revision 1	X
21. The local board complies with restrictions governing the use of federal funds for political activities, the use of the one-stop environment for political activities, and the local board complies with the applicable certification and disclosure requirements	WorkSource System Policy 1018; 2 CFR Part 225 Appendix B; 2 CFR Part 230 Appendix B; 48 CFR 31.205-22; RCW 42.52.180; TEGL 2-12; 29 CFR Part 93.100	X
22. The local board ensures that one-stop MSFW and business services staff, along with the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker program partner agency, will continue to provide services to agricultural employers and MSFWs that are demand-driven and consistent with ESD's mission.	WIOA Section 167	X
23. The local board follows confidentiality requirements for wage and education records as required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended, WIOA, and applicable Departmental regulations.	WIOA Sections 116(i)(3) and 185(a)(4); 20 USC 1232g; proposed 20 CFR 677.175 and 20 CFR part 603	X
Administration of Funds	References	X
24. The local board has a written policy and procedures to competitively award grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities (or applicable federal waiver), including a process to be used to procure training services made as exceptions to the Individual Training Account process.	WIOA Section 108(b)(16); proposed 20 CFR 679.560(a)(15); WIOA Title I Policy 5601; WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(G); proposed 20 CFR 680.300-310	X
25. The local board has accounting systems that follow current Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and written fiscal-controls and fund-accounting procedures and ensures such procedures are followed to insure proper disbursement and accounting of WIOA adult, dislocated worker, and youth program and the Wagner-Peyser Act funds.	WIOA Section 108(b)(15), WIOA Title I Policy 5230; WIOA Title I Policy 5250	X

26. The local board ensures compliance with the uniform administrative requirements under WIOA through annual, on-site monitoring of each local sub-recipient.	WIOA Section 184(a)(3); proposed 20 CFR 683.200, 683.300, and 683.400-410; WIOA Policy 5230	X
27. The local board has a local allowable cost and prior approval policy that includes a process for the approval of expenditures of \$5,000 or more for equipment requested by subcontractors.	WIOA Title I Policy 5260	X
28. The local board has a written debt collection policy and procedures that conforms with state and federal requirements and a process for maintaining a permanent record of all debt collection cases that supports the decisions made and documents the actions taken with respect to debt collection, restoration, or other debt resolution activities.	WIOA Section 184(c); 20 CFR Part 652; proposed 20 CFR 683.410(a), 683.420(a), 683.750; WIOA Title I Policy 5265	X
29. The local board has a written policy and procedures for ensuring management and inventory of all properties obtained using WIOA funds, including property purchased with JTPA or WIA funds and transferred to WIOA, and that comply with WIOA, Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) and, in the cases of local government, Local Government Property Acquisition policies.	WIOA Section 184(a)(2)(A); proposed 20 CFR 683.200 and 683.220; OMB Uniform Administrative Guidance; Generally Accepted Accounting Procedures (GAAP); WIOA Title I Policy 5407	X
The local board will not use funds received under WIOA to assist, promote, or deter union organizing.	WIOA Section 181(b)(7); proposed 20 CFR 680.850	X
Eligibility	References	X
31. The local board has a written policy and procedures that ensure adequate and correct determinations of eligibility for WIOA-funded basic career services and qualifications for enrollment of adults, dislocated workers, and youth in WIOA-funded individualized career services and training services, consistent with state policy on eligibility and priority of service.	Proposed 20 CFR Part 680 Subparts A and B; proposed 20 CFR Part 681 Subpart A; WorkSource System Policy 1019, Revision 1	X
32. The local board has a written policy and procedures for awarding Individual Training Accounts to eligible adults, dislocated workers, and youth receiving WIOA Title I training services, including dollar and/or duration limit(s), limits on the number of times an individual may modify an ITA, and how ITAs will be obligated and authorized.	WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(G); Proposed 20 CFR 680.300-320; WIOA Title I Policy 5601	X
33. The local board has a written policy and procedures that establish internal controls, documentation requirements, and leveraging and coordination of other community resources when providing supportive services and, as applicable, needs-related payments to eligible adult, dislocated workers, and youth enrolled in WIOA Title I programs.	WIOA Sections 129(c)(2)(G) and 134(d)(2); proposed 20 CFR 680.900-970; proposed 20 CFR 681.570; WorkSource System Policy 1019, Revision 1	X

34. The local board has a written policy for priority of service at its WorkSource centers and, as applicable, affiliate sites and for local workforce providers that ensures veterans and eligible spouses are identified at the point of entry, made aware of their entitlement to priority of service, and provided information on the array of employment, training and placement services and eligibility requirements for those programs or services.

Jobs for Veterans Act;
 Veterans' Benefits,
 Health Care, and
 Information
 Technology Act; 20 CFR
 1010; TEGL 10-09;
 Veterans Program
 Letter 07-09;
 WorkSource System
 Policy 1009 Revision 1

X

Signatures		
Kenneth Dahlstedt	DocuSigned by: <i>Kenneth Dahlstedt</i>	6/22/2020
Local Chief Elected Official(s)		Date
Del McAlpine	DocuSigned by: <i>Del McAlpine</i>	6/22/2020
Local Workforce Development Board Chair		Date

ATTACHMENT G

Regional/Local Workforce Plan Certification

The Local Workforce Development Board for Northwest Workforce Development Area III, Northwest Workforce Council, certifies that it complies with all required components of Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and Title III Wagner-Peyser Act and plan development guidelines adopted by the State Workforce Development Board. The LWDB also assures that funds will be spent in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Wagner-Peyser Act, and their regulations, written U.S. Department of Labor guidance implementing these laws, Office of Management and Budget circulars, and all other applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

Honorable Kenneth Dahlstedt
Chief Local Elected Official

Date

Delbert N. McAlpine
Chair, Northwest Workforce Council

Date

ATTACHMENT H

Plan Development Process

In the Northwest workforce region, strategic planning is an on-going aspect of the work at both the Board and its standing committees, and at the partnership tables/teams as well. Notes and minutes of these meetings reflect the sustained commitment to inclusive, proactive local planning in the context of continuous quality improvement. Early community notification of plan development guidelines was made known through NWC Board and Committee meetings, at the Partnership Management team, and active solicitation of comment and issues from workforce partners and community stakeholders as the plan was being developed. Status updates were provided at every subsequent meeting.

The current Regional Workforce Plan 2016-2020, the Regional Business Services Plan, the One- Stop Quality Improvement Plan (derived from the robust, board-driven, WorkSource Certification process), and results from customer satisfaction protocols each serve as foundation pieces for the subsequent planning, development, and implementation work that follows. The Council sustains an environment where partnership and collaboration are the hallmark of the workforce system. Strong, long-standing convivial agency relationships know the strength of working collaboratively maximizes the best possible outcomes for each.

- NWC's Quality Assurance Committee reviewed its robust, Malcolm Baldrige- based WorkSource Certification process through its own continuous quality improvement process with the board approving the revised process in December 2017.
- Early initial notification of available regional plan development time- and guidelines to NWC Planning Committee meeting at November 5, 2019 Meeting.
- Early community notification of plan development guidelines and discussion at NWC Board meeting December 11, 2019.
- Presentation by Dr. Hart Hodges, WWU Center for Economic and Business Research and CJ Seitz, Director of WWU Small Business Development Center led a presentation focused on emergent workforce issues in the NW region at NWC December 11, 2020 Board Meeting.
- Northwest Workforce Partnership Management Team discusses WIOA 2020 Regional Plan guidelines, timeline and goals and its role in contributing to the writing of the local plan beginning December 19, 2015 and ongoing.
- Solicitation of written input from plan's writing team including Northwest Workforce Council, Bellingham Technical College, Whatcom Community College, Skagit Valley College, Employment Security Department, DSHS Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, AARP, DSB and other MOU signatures and community partners, January 22, 2020.
- NW Regional Analysis for 2020 Regional Workforce Plan research on the regional economy and labor market, the current and future workforce, and the workforce development system initiated with Hart Hodges PhD, and James McCaferty, PhD, Co-Directors, WWU Center for Economic & Business Research and Regional Labor Economist Anneliese Vance-Sherman, PhD, ESD Labor Market & Economic Analysis, and NWC initiated January 27, 2020.

- Receipt and incorporation of workforce system partners' written plan submissions by completed by February 27, 2020.
- incorporation of strategic directions and actions from multiple complementary and parallel planning documents, grants and contracts, and action plans drawn from throughout the region.
- review and approval for publication on draft Regional Workforce Plan for 30 day public comment period at March 4, 2020 full NWC board meeting.
- a thirty day public comment period commencing March 2, 2020 with the draft Plan posted on the Council's website.

ATTACHMENT I PERFORMANCE TARGETS

WIOA Common Measure Indicators: Proposed PY 2020 & 2021 Performance Targets for NWC

This page is intentionally left blank pending the results of state board negotiations with Department of Labor and with chief local elected officials and NWC Board

Program/Measure	NWC Proposed PY 20 Targets	NWC Proposed PY 21 Targets
Adult 2nd Quarter Employment		
Adult 2nd Quarter Earnings		
Adult 4th Quarter Employment		
Adult 4th Quarter Credential		
Adult Measurable Skill Gain		
Dislocated Worker 2nd Quarter Employment		
Dislocated Worker 2nd Quarter Earnings		
Dislocated Worker 4th Quarter Employment		
Dislocated Worker 4th Quarter Credential		
Dislocated Worker Measurable Skill Gain		
Youth 2nd Quarter Placement (Employment or Post-secondary Ed)		
Youth 2nd Quarter Earnings		
Youth 4th Quarter Placement (Employment or Post-secondary Ed)		
Youth 4th Quarter Credential		
Youth Measurable Skill Gain		

