

Larimer County Economic and Workforce Development Department
Local Plan for Program Year 2016-2019
Program Year 2018 Updates in Yellow

1. Provide an analysis of the economic conditions in the local area including:
 - a. Existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and
 - b. The employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations;

Please see the 2015 and updated 2017 Larimer County Economic and Workforce Overview report and the Talent 2.0 Regional Workforce Strategy (Fort Collins-Loveland Metro Area); February 2017.

2. Provide an analysis of the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the local area, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

Please see the 2015 and updated 2017 Larimer County Economic and Workforce Overview report and the Talent 2.0 Regional Workforce Strategy (Fort Collins-Loveland Metro Area); February 2017.

3. Provide an analysis of the workforce in the local area, including current labor force employment (and unemployment) data, and information on labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the local area, including individuals with barriers to employment.

Please see the 2015 and updated 2017 Larimer County Economic and Workforce Overview report and the Talent 2.0 Regional Workforce Strategy (Fort Collins-Loveland Metro Area); February 2017.

4. Provide an analysis of the workforce development activities (including education and training) in the local area, including an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services, and the capacity to provide such services, to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers in the local area.

The Career Services Team (CST) is the Wagner-Peyser job seeker services portion of the Larimer County Economic and Workforce Development Department (LCEWD). This team is responsible for services delivered to job seekers in-person, on the phone, or virtually. Services include job search and career pathway workshops, providing job seekers with core services (i.e., resume assistance, cover letter development, interviewing skills), assessing needs and making appropriate referrals internal or external to the agency and responding to general questions about Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits.

The CST provides support to onsite hiring events, local and regional job fairs, along with an active and ever-evolving website that offers job search related information and videos, career assessments, and current labor market information. The CST actively offers positive and productive outreach activities including job search related eblasts and notifications, providing job search workshops and related activities onsite at community organizations and events, public libraries, correctional institutions, non-profits, post-secondary institutions, and meets other unique job search related needs of Larimer County. The CST serves as an internal expert for the job seeker side of Connecting Colorado.

The primary strength of these services is the ability to assist large numbers of job seekers through workshops, open hours to meet with an employment specialist, and providing in-person, phone, or virtual job search assistance. The limitation of these services is the inability to be more individualized with each job seeker and to allocate the amount of time needed to serve the volume of job seekers in ways they would appreciate, due to limited funding for these services. Limited public awareness and value of Connecting Colorado as a viable job matching tool is also an ongoing challenge. The CST is currently realigning the resources of this team to expand their ability to serve job seekers in more meaningful ways, including more outreach to the community.

In the effort to understand the workforce needs of employers, the Business Services Team (BST) outreaches to employers and coordinates with organizations that provide services to employers. The goal is to identify employers that have workforce needs and understand how to help them meet that need. In addition to these outreach activities, the BST coordinates with the CST to create streamlined processes for matching job seekers with hiring employers. For example, if a cohort of job seekers is identified who all have a similar career goal, BST can outreach directly to employers hiring for positions that match. Additionally, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding may be available to train the cohort in skills needed to fill the position. It is also advantageous to connect directly with job seekers based on their skills, abilities and career goals and match them with open positions. Additionally, this effort makes our job fairs and hiring events much more productive for job seekers and employers.

The Career Transition Team (CTT) is the Larimer County Economic and Workforce Development Department (LCEWD) unit primarily responsible for the delivery of WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Technology Employment in Colorado Partnership (TEC-P), Sector Partnership National Emergency Grant (SP-NEG), Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) and Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA) programs. The inCompass Team, a vital component of the youth focused CareerRise team, is the LCEWD unit primarily responsible for delivery for all WIOA Youth programs. These teams have the capacity to deliver the following workforce development activities:

Intensive Job Search Assistance: This service is provided to all CTT and inCompass participants. Some participants may benefit exclusively from this service or they may use Intensive Job Search Assistance as a complement to other services outlined below.

As it relates to the performance accountability measures that support economic growth and self-sufficiency, the Career Transition Team (CTT) and the CareerRise Team work diligently to recruit and enroll customers most likely to benefit from services—services that can assist customers in becoming equipped with the education and skills necessary to support their economic growth and self-sufficiency.

WIOA establishes core measures for Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Funding, which includes the revision of the three Workforce Investment Act (WIA) measures, and two additional measures. WIOA establishes Youth measures which eliminates one measure, revises three WIA measures, and adds two new measures. Still to be determined is an employer measure that is expected to be implemented in the second year of the law. WIOA performance measures are designed to measure the effectiveness and continuous improvement of the workforce service delivery systems. Specific categories of the WIOA core measures include: entered into unsubsidized employment upon exit, retention of employment after exit in the second and fourth quarters, median earnings upon exit, credential attainment within one year of exit, measurable skills gain in real time, and indicators of effectiveness in serving employers.

Individuals with barriers to employment are often referred to WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth services via on-site, internal partners. These partners currently consist of the Career Services Team (Wagner-Peyser), Employment First (SNAP), and the Colorado Works (TANF) teams. The LCEWD is committed to maximizing our mandated partner relationships to prepare WIOA candidates for success.

Beyond recruitment and hard-skill acquisition, staff also assist their customers in creating an awareness of current workplace trends and expectations (soft skills), so that the customers are not only prepared to secure and retain their employment, but also to create new and further economic opportunity for themselves and their families.

The primary strength of this service is a customized Individual Employment Plan (IEP)/Individualized Service Strategy (ISS) developed in partnership with each participant. The participant's IEP/ISS considers important life factors (i.e., resources, challenges, workplace and family values, and special family needs) that may affect a job search and the type of employment the customer secures. Through the IEP/ISS, staff works diligently with participants to create career pathway visions through the use of assessments, counseling, and case management services.

The major drawback of the Intensive Job Search Assistance service is that it is time/labor intensive for both the counselor and the participant. For best results, the counselor/participant must meet on a regular basis to continually adjust and refine the job search strategy. Counselors usually employ technology to maintain regular, real-time contact with their participants engaged in Intensive Job Search Assistance (i.e., phone, email, text, scanning technology).

Work-Based Learning (Internship Program): The primary work-based learning activity offered by the LCEWD is the subsidized internship program. LCEWD's internship program is coordinated by a cross-functional team called the Training Resources Team (TRT). This team meets the needs of local businesses and job seekers through active worksite development and placement. Often times, the work-based learning service builds opportunities for placement in a career pathway of interest, making the learning applicable to their longer term employment and training goals. Due to the unique model of the internship program, there are several access points throughout the agency, making it a popular service for a variety of customers.

The capacity of this service is usually limited by the availability of employer worksites for certain participants with very specific skill development needs and/or a lack of financial/staff resources to fully meet employer and participant interest in the internship program.

Individual Training Accounts (ITAs): WIOA participants have the opportunity to apply for ITA scholarship funds for the development of in-demand work skills or credentials that lead to their identified career pathway. Due to the decreasing availability of funds, participants in the Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs may be awarded up to \$2,500 - \$3,000 in tuition assistance (ITA amount will be confirmed upon receipt of federal allocations); more funding may be available if co-enrollment into another program/funding stream with training funds is available. The funding streams may include internal funding streams or co-enrollment opportunities with other agencies. These teams have developed strong partnerships with area training providers such as Front Range Community College (FRCC), Aims Community College, Northern Colorado Trucking Academy, Sage Truck Driving Schools, Columbine Health Systems, Fort Collins Digital Workshop, and Colorado State University. Although no longer operational, the CTT had developed a simple and standard working partnership with FRCC for specific training in Front/BackEnd Web Lab and Medical Coding Fundamentals. What made this partnership unique was the fact that WIOA directly recruited customers interested in these industry-approved trainings. WIOA provided scholarship and intensive job search assistance during the duration of their relationship with CTT.

Despite these strong local partnerships, the CTT's capacity to provide ITA scholarship assistance is limited by fluctuating resources, the federally mandated Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), and the overall availability of low-cost, quick, and in-demand skills training in the local area.

The LCEWD remains an active participant in the Northern Colorado Sector Partnerships, specifically in Manufacturing and Healthcare. Through this partnership, the LCEWD will continue exploring opportunities to learn what business talent needs are going unfilled and how CTT and inCompass services can provide training solutions to resolve these needs.

Please refer to questions 16 for a thorough review of WIOA Youth Services.

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Beyond recruitment and hard-skill acquisition, staff also assist their customers in creating an awareness of current workplace trends and expectations (soft skills), so that the customers are not only prepared to secure and retain their employment, but also to create new and further economic opportunity for themselves and their families.

5. Describe the local board's strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment), including goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance described in section 116(b)(2)(A) in order to support economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.

The socio-economic realities in Larimer County are undergoing a significant shift and will continue to change over the coming decades. The local Workforce Development Board (WDB) is working to understand the imminent changes and develop strategies to address them with key community partners. The overall vision and mission of the WDB are:

Vision: Cultivate a well-trained, productive, and competitive workforce in our region.

Mission: Connect community, government, business and education to shape a robust, talented and sustainable workforce.

In preparation for the transition to WIOA, the local WDB prioritized three functions to support the mission and vision. Those priorities are:

- Act as a convener: Convening, brokering, and leveraging with local workforce development system stakeholders to address local workforce issues and to identify expertise and resources to leverage support for workforce development activities.
- Local Plan: In partnership with the chief elected official for Larimer County, the WDB will develop a comprehensive 4-year local plan, and collaborate with other WDBs and Workforce Centers within the region to develop a regional plan to implement WIOA.
- Proven and promising practices: The WDB will lead efforts in Larimer County to identify, promote, and disseminate proven and promising strategies and initiatives to meet the needs of employers and workers.

In addition to the priorities highlighted above, the WDB is also setting strategic goals to:

- Take action and coordinate meaningful follow-up to the regular board meetings.
- Build awareness of the WDB and conduct greater outreach and marketing for the WDB and the LCEWD with the goal of creating more community engagement.

6. Describe the strategies and services that will be utilized to facilitate engagement of employers, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations, in workforce development programs. Specifically:
 - i. What outreach activities are planned to increase business engagement in your local area?
 - ii. How will the Business Services Team be utilized for this purpose?
 - iii. How will the members (particularly business members) of the LWDB and Youth Council/committee support these efforts?
 - iv. How will sector partnerships be utilized for this purpose?
 - v. What are your objectives and goals for these activities?

The Business Services Team (BST) is completing a rebranding of services provided to local employers. One of the goals of this process is to more effectively outreach to area employers by streamlining messaging and highlighting the value of our services. Additionally, each September, the LCEWD hosts an annual Workforce Symposium in partnership with the Workforce Development Board (WDB). The audience for this event is Northern Colorado business professionals to learn about state and local workforce issues, to hear best practices from businesses that have effective solutions to workforce challenges, and receive training on how they can institute solutions to workforce challenges in their own businesses. Members of the WDB plan the event and facilitate conversations about a variety of workforce management strategies throughout the day. The Workforce Symposium also provides an opportunity to highlight the work of our sector partnerships. BST assists businesses to understand and get as much value as possible from the services offered through the LCEWD. To this end, the BST will use the new brand to refine messaging and employer outreach activities. Outreach activities include face-to-face meetings, presentations, a business focused web page, social media, employer workshops, business round tables, email newsletters, event posting on community calendars, brochures, event flyers, and working with partners to promote services.

The LCEWD continues to convene and be an active partner in regional sector partnerships with the goal of understanding the workforce needs of the participating employers and supporting their efforts. Additionally, the LCEWD is a lead organizer of the region's Public Partners Coordination Group which provides coordinated and effective responses to workforce needs identified by the sector partnerships. BST employer engagement and outreach activities focus on in-demand industries and small employers. Sector partnerships provide an opportunity to focus on specific industries. LCEWD staff support employers in the Transportation, Healthcare, Manufacturing, and Information Technology industries. Most employers in these industries (and throughout Larimer County) are small businesses and, because of this, the LCEWD has formed strategic partnerships with the Larimer County Small Business Development Center, the local Chambers of Commerce in the County, and a variety of business associations. These partners are key to engaging small business and the BST's ability to assist with solutions to identified workforce challenges.

7. Discuss the implementation of initiatives designed to meet the needs of employers in the local area that support the local board's strategy, including:

One of the top priorities for the WDB was the development of a workforce and economic health dashboard to help inform the Board and LCEWD staff about the current status and future trends facing the County. In 2016, two versions of the dashboard were released focusing on employment, education, housing and transportation. In 2017, the goal was to move the dashboard online. The online version did not fully materialize in 2017, but is scheduled for release in 2018. The WDB maintains an online library of reports/data relevant to the economic and workforce health of the region. In addition, the Economic and Workforce Health report was updated in February 2017 and a new version of the Spring 2017 Economic and Workforce Health Report was finalized and distributed in May 2018. Armed with quality data and sound interpretation, the Board and staff should be able to better navigate the rapidly changing workforce and economic environment in our region. Additionally, the WDB's focus on convening and collaborating with various organizations and workforce stakeholders will lay a foundation for much of the implementation that will occur via the BST. The WDB convened and collaborated with various organizations and workforce stakeholders in 2017. Four well-attended topic presentation and the Workforce Symposium were hosted by the WDB.

- i. **Work-Based Learning Programs:** Explain how you will utilize and promote incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, internships, or other activities for PY16. Add information based on plans your local area developed at the 2017 TalentFound Academy or Sectors Summit.

Work-Based Learning Programs: A current strength of the LCEWD is the implementation of work-based learning programs, most notably subsidized internships. Through the lens of a common mission, the LCEWD committed staffing resources to organize an internal, cross-functional team of staff titled the Training Resources Team (TRT). TRT's mission is to implement the wide variety of work-based learning services including internships, apprenticeships, and on-the-job training (OJT) for customers from all LCEWD programs. Combining staffing expertise across these local/state/federal funds allows this integrated team to work with industry partners in a concerted effort, resulting in less duplicated business contact matched with professional staff to address talent needs, regardless of the funding stream or targeted populations.

Vision of the Work-Based Learning Plan: To remain competitive in the 21st century economy, the LCEWD recognizes that solutions to address the talent shortage and skills gap in primary industries are critical. Current economic conditions are forcing a re-evaluation of how economic and workforce development services are provided to the business community while also continuing to serve some of the most vulnerable and impoverished populations. The emergence of work-based learning opportunities provides a solution to address issues related to current and projected struggles with the talent pipeline. Work-based learning is a continuum of activities that engages employers to offer students and job seekers the opportunity to learn, in the workplace, and to develop hands-on, real world experience.

In three to five years, through the efforts and energy of dedicated partners, Larimer County will develop a vibrant and thriving work based learning community that meets business demands and supports the professional needs of job seekers in an innovative, efficient, responsive, and proactive manner.

Status of the Work-Based Learning Plan: The LCEWD has existing initiatives through long-standing and active sector partnerships in advanced manufacturing and health care, plus a variety of activities that serve emerging sector partnerships in information technology, transportation, and the arts. All of these entities are interested in an active, vibrant work-based learning community to address some of their talent pipeline demands.

Likewise, the LCEWD has a lengthy and robust history of partnership with the three school districts located in Larimer County: Poudre School District (PSD) (Fort Collins) , Estes Park School District (EPSD), and Thompson School District (TSD) (Loveland). Career road trips, entrepreneurial programs, career search presentations, career fairs, teacher institutes, and summer employment programs are part of the services provided to students and teachers within the three school districts.

An Opportunity for the LCEWD: The LCEWD has been approached by two of the three school districts and several community partners and asked to assume a lead role in **convening key stakeholders** in Larimer County for the **development and implementation of a robust Work-Based Learning Community** in partnership with the school districts, CareerWise Colorado, and other community partners (i.e., Early Childhood Council and Associates in Family Medicine). Sector based employment would be an important aspect of the work-based learning system.

While the LCEWD is able to serve many different roles, the current objective is to dedicate experienced staff to the **development of a county-wide work-based learning program** for high school students, particularly within the **employer-engagement and apprenticeship** arenas, and to **build an infrastructure** that supports all forms of work-based learning opportunities, including registered and non-registered apprenticeships, for a wide-range of interested job seekers to address concerns with the talent pipeline and to meet business needs.

The work-based learning plan will focus on identifying and building an infrastructure for a vibrant and thriving work-based learning community. Staff is responsible for the following goals:

- Convene and support a wide-range of partners to develop and implement processes and agreements to support a thriving work-based learning community in Larimer County, with an initial emphasis on apprenticeships within the school districts and in-demand registered apprenticeships. Partner leadership related to convening meeting organization, facilitation, and minute documentation.

- Document the partnership(s), and agreed-upon processes, to provide operational clarity for the partners, outline the unification and availability of resources relevant to work based activities, preserve institutional knowledge and lessons learned, and provide a blueprint for new partners and other communities as they build thriving work-based learning communities. Create established partner norms and/or code of commonalities that tie the collective work together. Develop a menu of service options for each public partners that guides conversations with interested businesses.
- Establish common approaches and practices when partners are working unilaterally and find opportunities that stretch beyond their systems.
- Develop and implement agreed-upon coding and reporting structures to identify and collect data for future evaluation and continuous improvement activities. Determine processes/procedures to collect and store information, agreements, and share information to reduce duplication.
- Elevate the credibility of the workforce development system as a key stakeholder and contributor in the establishment of the local and regional work-based learning community and in convening partners for action that benefits employers and residents.
- Coalesce work-based learning partners to galvanize community influence and financial resources to stabilize and grow the benefits and opportunities associated with a vibrant and thriving work-based learning community.

Internships supported through the WIOA Youth, Adult, Dislocated Worker, Colorado Works, ReHire Colorado, and Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) programs have a minimum of one of the following three goals. Often, a work-based learning program may incorporate two or three of these goals.

- **Career exploration through real-world occupation experience:** Clarifying an occupational direction through hands-on learning, prior to starting credential training, often helps participants make better career decisions. In addition, participants working diligently on their alternative diplomas increase their motivation to succeed if they have a career pathway identified and linked to their diploma work.
- **Work readiness and work literacy skill development:** Often time these types of skills are referred to as the “soft skills” of obtaining and retaining employment. Work-based learning programs are often the first work experience participants have as they grapple with and understand the responsibilities of work and/or re-enter the workforce after a gap.
- **Work history building, occupational skill acquisition, and connection to professional networks associated with their career pathway of interest:** Having tangible work-based learning experiences to discuss with future employers, in addition to surrounding oneself in a community of professionals, leads to higher employment success rates for participants. Work-based learning experiences can be constructed to ensure technical skills training is developed under the supervision of industry professionals.

The subsidized internship program continues to experience success and interest in the service has grown among job seekers and employers. The LCEWD will continue offering this service and explore ways to grow and focus placements with in-demand and/or sector industries.

The LCEWD continues to explore apprenticeship and on-the-job training opportunities as methods of work-based learning. Current operations align to work directly with industry partners that identify a candidate who may benefit from an OJT or apprenticeship.

The LCEWD remains actively involved in the Northern Colorado Manufacturing Sector Partnership. Through this partnership, the LCEWD sponsors the locally designed Career Road Trip “Manufacturing Rocks!” model, administered by staff in the CareerRise program (i.e., services for youth and young adults) in conjunction with the BST. Career Road Trips (CRT) brings emerging industry leaders and young people together with the goal of experiencing future careers along with interacting with employers motivated to build a talent pipeline through career exposure and career pathways.

Three distinct service offerings comprise CRT in Larimer County, in addition to one unique CRT offering for secondary school educators. LCEWD staff lead each activity including business tour coordination, pre-tour career exploration workshops, prep sessions on appropriate engagement with professionals during tour visits, research on current and future labor market predictions, and the experiential component of touring businesses to learn about the occupations offered and the products/services that are created.

CRT Service One: Embedded in our local high schools, the LCEWD manages large-scale tours partnering with local high schools across two districts in the spring of each year. In 2017-2018, 369 students and 23 businesses were served through 42 career tours. This service is expected to grow throughout the four-year WIOA plan.

CRT Service Two: A hallmark service for summer youth services in Larimer County, LCEWD managed full-day, camp-like settings for youth (14-24) in all income brackets. During summer 2017, 30 students and 12 businesses were served through eight career tours in a two-day span. This service is expected to grow throughout the four-year WIOA plan.

CRT Service Three: The Colorado Workforce Development Council’s vision of regional sector partnerships led LCEWD to support the Manufacturing sector in Northern Colorado. Industry leaders were eager to adopt the CRT model to expose middle and high school students to the world of Manufacturing. Approximately 255 middle and high school students and 17 manufacturing businesses were served in 29 career tours thus far during 2017-2018 school year.

This service is expected to grow throughout the four-year WIOA plan and the LCEWD plans to raise sponsorships from industry partners to create work-based learning opportunities for all interested youth ages 16-18 in the Manufacturing sector.

CRT Service Four: As a result of the momentum built from the above services, and the need for secondary school educators to incorporate employment and career related learning in the classroom, the LCEWD was approached by one of our K-12 partners, the Poudre School District (PSD), to manage a two-day professional development program for teachers. This fee-for-service CRT served 30 teachers and 12 businesses for 4 career tours in summer 2017. District school leaders have initiated conversations regarding growing and advancing this service throughout the four-year WIOA plan.

In summary, 647 students and 30 educators connected with 58 unique businesses and/or training providers for 83 career tours that provided advanced work-based learning initiatives while also supporting local sector partnerships during the last three years. The LCEWD will actively grow and enhance strategies for CRT services and plans to increase customers served, as well as the number and type of businesses.

Summer Manufacturing Internships: The NoCo Manufacturing Sector Partnership and LCEWD will place high school students, ages 16-18, with local manufacturers into paid internship experiences in the summer 2018. The LCEWD will administer the program for the third year which includes building the employer partnerships, marketing the program to youth, vetting the applicants for business, completing the pre-employment requirements, placing the interns, administering the payroll, monitoring the evaluations and closing out the internships. This program gave the manufacturers an avenue to easily host high school interns while connecting to their future workforce. The LCEWD encouraged and challenged businesses to host positions under 18 years old. Through this work, we have enabled youth to increase their skills, explore career options and gain exposure to the manufacturing industry. This year, 15 interns will be placed among nine companies. The sector partnership provided \$15,000 towards the cost of hosting the interns and the participating employers paid the difference, making the program fully funded by the manufacturing industry and sector partnership.

Larimer County Department of Health and Environment: The Larimer County Department of Health and Environment (LCDHE) reached out to the LCEWD to support two, year-long internship opportunities for high school students, ages 16-18, in Larimer County. The LCEWD will provide support in recruitment, professional development, division of supervision, and performance evaluation. The LCDHE is funding the youth position through a Colorado Department of Health and Environment grant focused on reducing risk and protective factors in the community that contribute to youth substance use. The focus of the work includes, but is not limited to, providing youth perspective and recommendations to inform health outreach and education activities, reviewing social media and print materials for relevance for youth audiences, and serving on community-wide coalitions to offer youth perspective and represent the youth voice. The first internship will start July 2018 for a one year commitment.

- ii. **Sector Partnerships Participation:** Explain how you will utilize the relationships built by your Business Services Team to enhance or expand participation in Sector Partnerships and also expand business services efforts. Indicate PY18 specific planned objectives and measurable outcomes.

Moving into the third year of operation, the Manufacturing and Healthcare sector partnerships continue to serve as useful models for engaging private sector and public partners in beneficial business service efforts. With significant wins accomplished, sector partnerships are attracting more businesses and helping the BST grow deeper relationships with long-standing members. Moreover, the LCEWD is seeing more crossovers between sector partnerships and the local WDB, creating more synergy between the two and facilitating stronger relationships between private sector and the workforce system.

As mentioned above, the CareerRise Team and BST coordinate the Career Road Trips (CRT) for young adults, exposing them to careers and opportunities in the field of manufacturing. This activity opens the door for BST to offer additional services to the Manufacturers who host tours. Another example of collaboration through sector partnership is the organizing of a successful job fair at the annual Healthcare Summit hosted by a local Chamber of Commerce in conjunction with sector support. The job fair, organized by the BST, greatly added success to the entire event. Additionally, the BST adds value to the sectors partnerships through their standard programmatic offerings while augmenting their customized support for individual businesses.

- iii. **Sector Partnerships - Status and Objectives:** In your local area or with partner local areas, what sector partnerships are you engaged in or do you plan to engage in during PY18? Indicate the current status of your partnerships, (active, emerging, or exploring), plus PY18 planned objectives and measurable outcomes.

The LCEWD is actively engaged in the two sector partnerships that exist in our region: Manufacturing and Healthcare. The LCEWD will continue to work with the Sector Partnerships to advance work-based learning. In conjunction with the Northern Colorado (NOCO) Manufacturing Partnership, the LCEWD is coordinating with other public partners to increase the number of work-based learning opportunities available to students/job seekers and manufactures. In support of the Health Sector Partnership's goals, the LCEWD is compiling information on existing registered apprenticeship programs in Northern Colorado as well as supporting individual healthcare providers who are starting register apprenticeships.

Manufacturing Sector Partnership: The LCEWD is actively engaged with the NOCO Manufacturing Sector Partnership. One of the primary activities of the manufacturing sector partnership is Manufacturing Rocks!

According to the NOCO Manufacturing Sector Partnership website, **Manufacturing ROCKS!** mission is to connect the future workforce (particularly students) to manufacturing careers, by connecting them with tours of local manufacturers and working with educators to provide manufacturing presentations, internships and scholarship opportunities. Along the way, the tours highlight career opportunities that exist by showing what companies do first-hand and also by focusing on the experiences of current manufacturers.

The tours dispel outdated myths regarding manufacturing jobs and highlight current careers which involve technology, computers, robotics and processes in an engaged and safe workplace. The NOCO Manufacturing Sector Partnership is dedicated to creating interesting and innovative ways for students to learn about the manufacturing industry. The tours encourage participation through hands-on activities, walking through manufacturers facility, and seeing the company's operation and finished products. This is where imaginations come alive and the students can visualize what a future in manufacturing could be.

Accomplishments:

- Over 1,600 middle and high school students have participated in 86 Manufacturing Rocks! Tours with local manufacturers. Many students say these tours changed their perception of the manufacturing industry and more would consider manufacturing as a profession.
- The Parent's Manufacturing, Design & Engineering Night hosted by Woodward was highly successful, drawing over 200 parents from the region to learn about 21st century manufacturing and how they or their kids can find rewarding careers in the industry.
- The NoCo Manufacturing Sector Partnership and the LCEWD Department collaborated on a summer internship program that has placed 8 school students with local manufacturers in paid internship experiences. The intent of this program is to enable youth to increase their skill sets, explore career options and gain exposure to the manufacturing industry.
- To date, and according to the website, the NoCo Manufacturing Sector Partnership has engaged in an in-depth process to uncover actionable information on key skills gaps in manufacturing. The talent committee has used labor market data and qualitative input from NoCo manufacturing hiring authorities and employees to understand the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed for employees to be successful in a set of six critical occupations: *Machinists, Welders, Assemblers, Technical Sales Representatives, Engineers, and Production Managers*. In addition to detailed profiles of each of these critical occupations, this process has uncovered a set of foundational talent needs for the broader manufacturing workforce. Based on the results of this process, the talent committee has identified priority actions to address skills gaps and improve the manufacturing talent pipeline in Northern Colorado.
- Completed the Critical Occupations Study in October of 2015. Update to the study is due to be released in spring of 2017.
- Held collaborative Regional Meetings for educators, workforce agencies, and manufacturers to address how schools may better leverage their industry advisory councils and to learn the needs.
- Scholarship Funding Program provided \$6,000 to students in 2016 to enroll in programs that support student moving into a manufacturing career pathway.
- Participated in Career Fairs around the Northern Colorado region.
- Partnership members serving on Career and Technical Education Advisory Boards for Poudre Valley High School, Front Range Community College and Aims Community College.
- Held first Regional Advisory Board Meeting for High Schools in 2016.

- Working to establish Internship programs with local manufacturers and young people from the Northern Colorado region.
- Sandra Jackam, Senior Employment Specialist with the LCEWD received the 2017 Public Partner Volunteer of the Year Award through the NOCO Manufacturing Partnership.

Goals in 2018:

- Expand work-based experiences for students.
- Adapt curriculum to meet industry demand.
- Strengthen capacity and connections of education and training providers.

Health Sector Partnership: The LCEWD is actively engaged with the Northern Colorado Health Sector and this role includes serving on the regional convener team, participating on committees and contributing to ad hoc work groups on specific projects. On the convener team, the LCEWD plays an important role to help align resources around the industry priorities and serve as a voice for the workforce and economic development community with the organization. The LCEWD also serves as the organization's fiscal agent and is responsible for overseeing financial management of the partnership.

The committee in which the LCEWD is most involved is the workforce committee, whose overarching goal is to "bring health sector employers together with educators and workers to meet growing workforce needs". The LCEWD does this by introducing students and young people to local healthcare businesses through tours and work based learning experiences. While many young people are aware of the career fields related patient facing occupations (e.g., doctor or nurse), far fewer are aware of the diversity of jobs available within the healthcare system (e.g., facilities management, nutrition, information technology). Through school presentation and facility tours young people are exposed to a wide variety of career options in healthcare. This is not always easy in the highly regulated healthcare environment, but the Health Sector Partnership is finding creative ways to get young people interested in healthcare related fields and start them on an academic track alongside work experiences that will increase their likelihood of success.

In addition to promoting the health sector as a viable career option, the Health Sector Partnership is also working on overcoming some of the systemic challenges that have contributed to the regional nursing shortage. A work group is being put together to prioritize strategies that can be deployed in the region over the course of the 12-18 months.

A few notable successes from the last year include:

- Working with Front Range Community College and Aims Community College to support scholarships in Medical Assistant programs. The scholarships cover the fees for the certification exam that is required to work as a medical assistant in Colorado. This removes one of the barriers for young people to move from the classroom to a clinical environment.
- Helping to facilitate a Registered Apprenticeship Program for Medical Assistants with Associates in Family Medicine.
- Helping to launch a new Medical Assistant program at Front Range Community College.
- Sponsored a Healthcare Career Panel for High School teachers and counselors. Panels included participants from Banner Health, UC Health, Columbine Health, Touchstone Health Services. Over 50 high school teachers and counselors attended the panel and toured the hospital talking to a diverse set of employees about their jobs.
- Hosted a high school career event to inform students about a variety of medical careers and career paths. This is being piloted with 20 students from Poudre School District and includes discussion and activities representing behavioral health, nursing, technicians, and senior care.
- Hosting a job fair at the annual Healthcare Summit in collaboration with the Fort Collins Area Chamber of Commerce.

Goals in 2018:

- Expand work based learning experiences for students in the health sector.
- Launch a registered apprenticeship for medical assistants.
- Increase regional capacity to train and graduate qualified nurses.

LCEWD will continue to work with the Manufacturing and Health Sector Partnerships in 2018.

- iv. **Career Pathways:** Explain how you will utilize information gathered through your Business Services Team to provide a baseline for consideration of new or enhanced sector partnerships, and how this information will be used to inform changes to or development of Career Pathways in your Local Area. Indicate specific PY16 planned objectives and measurable outcomes.

While the opportunity to develop additional sector partnerships (in addition to Manufacturing and Healthcare) may exist, the regional Public Partner team is holding off on creating new partnerships until additional resources can be allocated to the launch and ongoing management. In regards to career pathways, the Manufacturing sector has identified critical occupations and has started mapping the skills needed for each one. This effort was completed as part of House Bill 13-1165, which allocated resources to this process. The LCEWD will continue to work in conjunction with the Northern Colorado Manufacturing Partnership to coordinate with other public partners to increase the number of work-based learning opportunities available to students/job seekers and manufacturers.

The Health Sector is actively pursuing funding to replicate what's being done in manufacturing with the goal to create career pathways for critical occupations. Additionally, the BST will actively work with educational partners and community-based organizations to identify target occupations to train participants/students to meet current and future workforce needs. LCEWD is committed to training staff in Labor Market Information tools, so they can provide customers with detailed information on appropriate career pathways. In support of the Health Sector Partnership's goals, the LCEWD will compile information on existing registered apprenticeship programs in Northern Colorado as well as support individual healthcare providers that are stating registered apprenticeships.

The LCEWD plans to further develop career pathways in the following ways:

- The LCEWD currently supports the Manufacturing Rocks! Subcommittee of the Manufacturing sector partnership. This subcommittee is focused on providing Career Road Trips (CRT) for young adults in Northern Colorado. CRTs are important to effective career pathways because they offer young people an inside look at careers and industries as they make decisions on future occupational directions.
 - To date, the most effective, mutually-beneficial work-based learning tool is subsidized internships. LCEWD will evolve internship services to include a focus on career pathways as established by the sector partnerships and other area industry partners. Aligning internships with career pathways will assist job seekers within internal programs to gain valuable hands-on experience in emerging and in-demand occupations and, subsequently, gaining long-term and satisfactory employment.
 - LCEWD will continue active partnerships with education providers, including higher education institutions that support sector partnership activities. In addition, the LCEWD plans to continue supporting our higher education partners that convene industry led advisory boards to shape training curriculum. Through these partnerships the LCEWD intends to deploy WIOA funded training resources when these advisory groups provide evidence in career pathway training that leads to employment.
8. Describe how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment, including how the local board will facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs, and improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable);

At the LCEWD, there are a number of co-located partners that share a common mission of assisting individuals with barriers to employment. These partners include: Wagner-Peyser, WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Veterans programs, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Employment First (SNAP), ReHire Colorado, and the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG).

As a result of these co-located partners, the LCEWD is well prepared to maximize resources to expand access to activities, for eligible individuals with barriers to employment, that result in meaningful employment through the attainment of credentials.

Additionally, staff from the **Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) has onsite days for meeting customers** interested in their services. For partners that are not co-located, the LCEWD hosts conversations about resource maximizing and co-enrollment strategies through the development of local Memorandum of Understandings (MOU) with partner agencies. Current relationships are established with the local offices of the DVR and Adult Basic Education (ABE) partners.

For WIOA Youth programs, the LCEWD continues to expand access to eligible youth by ensuring a strong presence within the community and with core program partners. The LCEWD currently hosts regularly scheduled orientations to explain eligibility requirements, services provided, and application instructions. The orientation is designed to be portable, resulting in off-site awareness opportunities to capture a wider audience. All youth-related services at the LCEWD have a strong social media presence, including Facebook pages. The CareerRise program now has **1,180** Facebook followers. The Larimer County Conservation Corps (LCCC) has **963** Facebook followers for a total of **2,143** Facebook followers for both programs. This platform is utilized to post events occurring within the LCEWD as well as throughout the community, including lists of open positions defined as entry level career path opportunities.

The LCEWD currently hosts youth oriented Open House events several times per year. Public and core partners are invited to the One-Stop locations to learn about WIOA and Wagner-Peyser services. Employers are also invited to participate so that attendees learn about what the employers are looking for in ideal employees. Many employers use these events to conduct onsite interviews and/or collect applications from interested attendees.

To expand access to youth who have become involved with probation and parole, LCEWD staff meets regularly with probation and parole officers. This has led to the establishment of a referral form for parole officers to expedite the enrollment process for candidates, along with periodic visits to correctional staff to share services and explore ways to facilitate the employment transition of young adults from incarceration.

The WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Discretionary Grant programs are well positioned to build co-enrollment opportunities outlined by WIOA. Currently, all WIOA Title I programs, along with Wagner-Peyser, are co-located in both our Loveland and Fort Collins locations. Similar services are available to Estes Valley residents on as needed basis.

The LCEWD continues to serve customers in new and creative ways that promote expanded access. Due to service demand and current funding limitations, the WIOA Adult program reached its funding capacity six months into PY 2015 and eight months into PY 2016. For the past two years consecutively, the WIOA Adult program has closed before the end of the program year due to a lack of funding. **The WIOA Adult program will remain open to veterans for the remaining quarter of the program year; however, all other enrollments will be deferred to PY18.** The same issue occurred in PY 2016 for the WIOA Dislocated Worker program as well.

The WIOA Dislocated Worker program will remain open for enrollments throughout the remainder of the program year. In an effort to continue meeting the needs of customers that qualify as WIOA Adults and/or Dislocated Workers, the Career Transition Team (CTT) collaborated with ReHire Colorado to integrate services as available.

LCEWD's staff has worked closely with the local Adult Basic Education (ABE) provider, Center for Adult Learning (CAL), to grow partnership opportunities to increase access to WIOA services for students enrolled in adult basic education activities. Adult Basic Education providers will organize LCEWD information sessions at both Loveland and Fort Collins CAL locations to improve access to WIOA services.

The LCEWD consistently achieves success in meeting enrollment and performance outcomes in the current service delivery structure. Expanding access for eligible individuals with barriers to employment will require further partnerships that outline resource alignment, resource obtainment, co-enrollment pathways, and shared participant goals.

9. Describe the strategy to work with adult education providers funded under Title II of WIOA and Vocational Rehabilitation to align resources available to the local area, to achieve the strategic vision and goals described in question 5.

The LCEWD has relationships established with the Adult Basic Education and Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) providers in Larimer County. These relationships have been in existence for years and have been utilized by local One-Stop staff as referring partner agencies for customers that may benefit from co-enrollment. Customers served by both partner agencies may be co-enrolled in the full array of LCEWD services.

The LCEWD will further discuss coordination of service delivery with both partner agencies in PY18. The goal is to reach local agreements regarding support of the One Stop delivery system, identify the service strengths of each agency, and develop an improved cross-agency referral process and co-enrollment linkages leading to the development and implementation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). In situations where a MOU is developed at a state level, conversations will occur regarding operationalization of the state derived agreements.

WIOA expects increased partnership alignment to maximize resources and to identify and utilize the strengths available through each system. As a result of this opportunity, cross-agency staff is enhancing current projects and creating new pilot partnership projects to advance the workforce preparation of customers engaged with these different providers.

In 2016, the LCEWD launched a pilot project to increase access of LCEWD staff to ABE students, at the ABE provider's classroom location. This partnership resulted in on-site workforce preparation services provided by LCEWD staff for all students, in tandem with the learning objectives led by ABE staff. It is estimated that this partnership resulted in up to 30 eligible students accessing WIOA Youth and Adult services.

10. Describe the strategies and services that will be utilized to strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs.

The LCEWD has robust linkages with the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program. Wagner-Peyser staff is currently engaged in several UI initiatives:

Current UI initiatives include:

- **Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessments (RESEA)** -- This partnership between the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) UI Division and LCEWD provides UI claimants with reemployment services earlier in their claim cycle. These claimants are **identified** by CDLE as likely to exhaust regular UI benefits and may benefit from job-search assistance services. Once claimants have been selected by the CDLE, the LCEWD conducts outreach and schedules each claimant for an orientation to LCEWD services. **The claimant is required to complete assessments, meet one-on-one with an employment specialist, complete job contacts and other activities to create an individualized job search plan to be reviewed by the LCEWD employment specialist. Failure to comply with the program requirements can affect the status of the claimant's UI claim. RESEA orientations and program services have been operational for most of PY17.**
- **UI Chat** – The LCEWD continues to provide UI Chat services in both offices.

11. Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with economic development activities carried out in the planning region, and promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services;

The local WDB recognizes and supports the idea that entrepreneurship is a viable opportunity for job seekers looking for the next opportunity. At the same time, the WDB has identified small-medium sized business support as a critical element in the suite of business services provided throughout the community. As a result, the WDB and LCEWD have developed programs and partnerships to serve budding entrepreneurs and small business.

The LCEWD was excited to see additional emphasis placed on promoting entrepreneurial skills training within the local plan. The LCEWD has a strong relationship with the Larimer Small Business Development Center, as documented with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Not only do the organizations reciprocate membership on each other's boards, we also have a memorandum of understanding on how we partner when it comes to entrepreneurial and small business support to avoid duplication of services and to minimize customer confusion regarding the functions of each entity. Additionally, the BST has specific programs to help entrepreneurs and small business owners scale their operations in Larimer County. The LCEWD plans to grow current partnerships and develop new partnerships in an effort to support entrepreneurship in Larimer County.

As evidence, the LCEWD has supported entrepreneurship services for eleven years within the CareerRise program through an innovative public/private partnership titled the Young Entrepreneur Tournament (YET). YET, funded for four years by the OtterCares Foundation, provides an opportunity for participants (18 years of age and under) to learn, create, and grow an idea into a business plan and compete in a business pitch competition to win business seed funds. The program occurs over four consecutive Saturdays with a final pitch event held the fifth Saturday.

Participants spend fifteen hours working with a contracted entrepreneurial facilitator to develop their ideas into feasible and attainable business plans. Participants have the opportunity to meet with local entrepreneurs for advice in building their business. Over the last ten years, 175 young adults have accessed entrepreneurial skills training.

12. Provide a description of the workforce development system in the local area that identifies the programs that are included in that system. Also describe how you will partner with the required WIOA partners to increase awareness of career pathways and the critical role that workforce development plays in ensuring that all Coloradans have access to educational and career pathways that result in meaningful employment.

The LCEWD provides a comprehensive workforce development system in Larimer County. With two physical office locations designed to meet the needs of the customers residing in different geographical areas of the County, the LCEWD offers the following programs:

- Wagner-Peyser (Career Services and Business Services)
- WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) and Trade Readjustment Allowance (TRA)
- Year-round youth services including Governor's Summer Job Hunt (GSJH)
- Larimer County Conservation Corps (self-sustaining conservation corps via contractual work and fee-for-service agreements)
- Technology Employment in Colorado (TEC-P) Grant via Denver Workforce Center/Office of Economic Development
- Sector Partnership National Emergency Grant (SP NEG) via CDLE
- Employment First (SNAP) via MOU with Larimer County Human Services
- Colorado Works (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) employment-focused services) via MOU with Larimer County Human Services
- ReHire Colorado via competitive grant from the Colorado Department of Human Services
- Larimer County Enterprise Zone
- CDLE Disabled Veterans Opportunity Program (DVOP) and Regional Veterans Employment Representative (RVER) Programs co-located at LCEWD
- Veterans Services Office (VSO)
- Economic Development

As described in other sections within the Plan, the LCEWD will partner with required WIOA partners to increase awareness of career pathways and will outline the critical role that workforce development plays in ensuring that all Coloradans have access to educational and career pathways that result in meaningful employment, contingent on available resources. For specifics, please refer to questions in 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8.

13. Describe the one-stop delivery system in the local area, in particular:

- i. Identify your key strategies for integrating the core programs, as well as all required partners, within the local one-stop system of full-service and satellite offices

The LCEWD implements the WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Title I programs, the Wagner-Peyser labor exchange Title III programs. Current relationships are well established with our local Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) and Adult Basic Education (ABE) partners. In fact, LCEWD recently conducted trainings at local ABE sites. This collaboration will likely result in co-enrollments between agencies and core job seeker services provided onsite. With respect to DVR, LCEWD is currently working with DVR leadership to strengthening our collaboration.

As mentioned in B8, a current strength of the LCEWD is the co-location of partners, i.e., Wagner-Peyser, Colorado Works/Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program and Employment First/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and **Economic Development**. Co-location results in linkages between programs which creates improved services to our businesses/employers and our job seekers.

Comprehensive One-Stop Office

Larimer County Economic and Workforce Development Department
Fort Collins, Colorado
200 W. Oak Street, Suite 5000

Additional Workforce Center Locations (not comprehensive)

Loveland, Colorado
418 E. 4th Street

The LCEWD has strong partnerships with libraries in each of the above towns/cities, as an affiliate site. To provide access for customers not familiar with the LCEWD, onsite workshops are offered at the libraries in Fort Collins, Loveland and Estes Park. The LCEWD coordinates with each library's employment/business services personnel for training as needed so that LCEWD staff is knowledgeable of the resources available to job seekers through the local libraries. The LCEWD frequently informs customers of the services and classes available at the libraries which may assist in their job search.

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

Under the direction of the Larimer County Board of Commissioners and the Workforce Development Board, LCEWD administers, supports and co-locates the following core programs: **Economic Development**, WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth, Wagner Peyser, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Works Program, Employment

First (SNAP) Program, Veterans services including Disabled Veterans Outreach Program, Regional Veterans Employment Representatives, Trade Adjustment Assistance and Unemployment Insurance initiatives including Links to Reemployment.

Program integration is managed through a unified Leadership Team with a coordinated and, at times, cross-functional service delivery system that includes common core services including customer orientations, workshops, resource lab, referrals to targeted programs and co-enrollments as appropriate. Resource sharing is accomplished through an approved Cost Allocation Plan outlining common costs and methodology for cost allocation. Core services provided through other one stop partners including ABE and DVR will be coordinated through the development of a Memorandum of Understanding developed at the State and local levels.

- c. Describe how the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and through other means; include your intended use of virtual job fairs, the upcoming virtual job shadowing capability, and other innovative strategies and initiatives to streamline and enhance services, as well as increase access.

The current technology LCEWD utilizes to reach remote areas includes Connecting Colorado and the LCEWD website. LCEWD staff is involved in statewide work groups to improve the functionality of Connecting Colorado for both the employer and job seeker. LCEWD has participated in virtual job fairs and will continue the use of virtual capability when appropriate. Staff across LCEWD teams are supporting a new project, “Skillful: A Markle Foundation Initiative”, that will utilize technology for middle skill customers. The Career Services team (Wagner-Peyser) continues to attempt to pilot a “Chat” service as a method to connect with remote job seekers.

- d. Identify the types of assessments and assessment tools that will be utilized within the one-stop delivery system and how these assessments will be coordinated across participating programs to avoid duplication of effort and multiple assessments of customers being served by more than one partner program.

The LCEWD offers a wide variety of assessments tools through the One-Stop center, many of which are accessible across partner agencies. Career assessments help participants identify their work values, aptitudes, and interests. These are helpful to begin to identify careers and career pathways of high interest. Many customizable career research tools including Labor Market Information and job descriptions are offered. Data reporting of actual assessments occurring at the LCEWD are reported into Connecting Colorado. This ensures that assessments are not duplicated in partner programs. Releases of information are completed, as required, to allow for the sharing of assessment results with other partners and/or partner agencies.

The Test for Adult Basic Education (TABE) is the common education assessment utilized at the LCEWD. The LCEWD has created informal service agreements with program partners to accept TABE results, up to six months within the previous testing date, in an effort to minimize duplication and redundancy. Results are shared after the participant has signed a Release of Information agreement between the participating agencies.

The following are common career awareness, clarification, and exploration assessments utilized at the LCEWD: College in Colorado, My Next Move, jobZology, EMSI Career Coach, Prove-It, and ONET. Each of these assessments serves different purposes to aid job seekers in the identification of occupations that match well with their specific interests and circumstances.

The following are common labor market identification tools utilized at the LCEWD: Wanted Analytics, Economic Modeling Specialist International (EMSI), ONET OnLine, Connecting Colorado Supply/Demand reports, in addition to more anecdotal tools including: industry input through sectors strategy conversations, Workforce Development Board sponsored business panels, and training vendor industry advisory groups.

- e. A description of how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with section 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities; and

LCEWD will take steps to ensure that appropriate auxiliary aids and services are made available when necessary to afford an individual with a disability an equal opportunity to participate in and enjoy the benefits of services as well as provide the following notification on our marketing collateral: “Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.”

All LCEWD facilities are accessible for individuals with disabilities. Yearly training will be conducted with the Wagner-Peyser job seeker team/LCEWD staff for the purpose of understanding technology and materials available for customers with disabilities. In addition, the Larimer County policy establishes a uniform policy and procedure ensuring that communications with applicants, participants and members of the public with disabilities are as effective as communications with others as well as an internal grievance process provided for prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action prohibited by regulations implementing the Americans with Disabilities Act.

We are in the process, as Colorado DVR aligns under CDLE, to create a robust partnership with our local DVR partners.

- f. A description of how the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, and workers and jobseekers;

The local WDB understands the importance of having eligible providers of services that deliver high quality, relevant training that meets the current and future needs of the business community, while serving the interests of the workers and job seeking population.

As the primary service provider, the LCEWD works hand-in-glove with the Board to ensure that a high level of quality service is delivered in the community. The Board receives regular updates from the Economic and Workforce Development Department Director and management team on program metrics. Detailed updates are also given to the Executive Committee of the WDB on a monthly basis. On an annual basis the WDB reviews and votes on the annual plan, which is designed to detail how the LCEWD will meet the needs of employers and the job-seeking population.

What's more is that the LCEWD management team meets on a weekly basis to discuss challenges and opportunities facing the **Economic and Workforce Development Department**. This is where much of the internal quality assurance occurs.

It is in everyone's best interest to make sure that the providers of services are well informed about the issues facing the workforce and business community. To do this, the local WDB strives to have participation from the LCEWD and many of its partners in the WDB activities, which are designed to convene people on various workforce related topics and connect individuals and organizations throughout the county. The WDB provides six meetings per year where specific workforce topics are addressed in depth. A diverse group of stakeholders is invited to attend and participate in these meetings, including some of the training providers. As a result the WDB is better informed of the needs of business and the challenges facing the workforce system and can communicate that back to the eligible provider of services.

The WDB will have five formal board meetings in 2018:

- Formal board meetings will focus on: Board business, including Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act (WIOA) implementation, Economic and Workforce Development Department budget review, in-depth information on innovative Economic and Workforce Development Department programs, and other relevant workforce initiatives.
- **The WDB has four topic presentations meetings planned for February, April, June, and October 2018.**
- Topic presentation meetings discuss timely workforce issues in depth such as workforce challenges of small businesses, career pathways, and strategies for attracting and retaining talent. A diverse group of stakeholders is invited to attend and participate in these meetings. Topic presentations are marketed to the community through social media, press releases and print marketing.

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

LCEWD will continue to support WIOA customer training through Individual Training Accounts in accordance with the law and applicable local policies. Eligible program participants who seek training services may, in consultation with Workforce Center staff, select a training vendor from the list of providers approved through the Colorado Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) process.

In addition, LCEWD provides navigation support for training vendors not yet approved on the ETPL. If the training vendor takes the necessary steps to comply with the ETPL requirements, access to training choices increases. It's common for LCEWD staff to work with training vendors that are new to the ETPL system to ensure training candidates receive quality training they choose to participate in. Upon selection, in accordance with local policies and available funding, LCEWD will refer the participant to the eligible provider and arrange for payment through an Individual Training Account. At this time, we do not intend to develop contracts for training services. However, should circumstances including customer demand and limited training opportunities warrant the development of customized training, LCEWD will work with our local Board to achieve the objectives.

- h. Outreach to Individuals with Barriers to Employment: Describe how you will engage your LWDB and Youth Council/committee to increase the awareness of the services offered to returning veterans, out-of-school youth, individuals with disabilities, long-term unemployed, and other targeted groups? What additional strategies will be utilized to reach out to these groups? What are your objectives and goals for this effort?

The LCEWD has a strong history of serving individuals with barriers across our One-Stop locations.

From July 1, 2017 through March 23, 2018, the WIOA Youth program maintained a steadfast commitment to serving many of the hardest to serve youth in Larimer County. Over this timeframe, 86% of youth entered services as disconnected from school, 25% entered services with a documented disability, 57% entered services as Basic Skills deficient, 26% entered services as offenders, 21% entered services as pregnant or parenting, and 3% reported homelessness. The LCEWD intends to maintain an ongoing commitment to recruit these participants, in addition to other targeted populations in need of services.

From July 1, 2017 through March 23, 2018, the WIOA Adult program provided services for adults with barriers in Larimer County. Over this timeframe, 75% of adults were verified to enter services attached to low-income households, 8% entered services as offenders, 30% single parents, 8% were not a high school graduate and 23% self-reported as disabled. The LCEWD values WIOA's focus of serving populations with barriers to employment.

WIOA is an opportunity to grow the recruitment strategy with partner agencies that specialize in serving targeted populations. To continue this strategy, we expect to host planning meetings with key stakeholder agencies will be held to determine unique strategies.

The LCEWD's objective and goal is to maintain the current strength of serving individuals with barriers to employment in the WIOA Youth program while building upon the current strength of serving individuals with barriers to employment in our WIOA Adult program. The LCEWD will meet the 60% statutory targeted populations enrollment objective set forth by the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE). The LCEWD is currently reporting 79% of the Adult Population meeting the statutory requirement with over 92% of the participants falling within a priority category.

14. Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate education and workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services;

Relationships with the educational institutions are critical for many of the services the LCEWD delivers on a regular basis. The first thing the WDB does to help coordinate education and workforce activities with secondary and postsecondary programs is to make sure there is regular communication between institutions. The WDB meetings serve as a place to convene education partners to learn about what the other is doing and how the organizations can collaborate. The WDB also has school district staff on the Board, and invites a number of different representatives from the school districts in the region to participate on the WDB. Moreover, the school districts are encouraged to leverage the WDB to reach out to the community and share what they are doing as it is related to workforce development.

Specifically, the LCEWD has made significant investments in providing services with many local secondary education partners. From July 1, 2013 through March 31, 2018, the CareerRise team provided services to 11,596 young adults ages 14-24. The CareerRise team is currently serving 1,914 this program year.

The majority of this data came from our growing partnership with secondary education partners and includes the following activities:

Presentations - Schools may request a one to two hour, group presentation on employment related preparation. In 2017, the CareerRise team provided approximately 80 of these types of presentations to local schools:

- Economic and Workforce Development Department Overview - Resources, services, internships, scholarships, etc.
- Job Search - Focusing your job search, self-marketing, & tips for applications
- Resume Building - Developing targeted resumes and identifying employer needs
- Interviewing Skills - Practicing common questions with tips & techniques
- Essential Skills - Activity on workplace expectations & success

- Career Exploration - Reviewing interest assessments, career pathways, & resources
- Generational Differences - Activity on the dynamics between generations at work
- Jobs and Economic Trends – Analyzing labor force, high demand careers, & tools

Mock Interviews - Students practice common questions, review their portfolio, and receive expert advice.

Career Road Trips - Partnership developed to tour behind-the scenes of local, emerging businesses. See question B7i for an analysis of Career Road Trip activities associated with K-12 partners.

Youth Jobs - Staff provide local business contacts that hire youth, promote upcoming hiring events in our monthly newsletter, and share current job postings on our Facebook page.

You Pitch an Idea! – Schools are suggested to pitch an idea that’s linked to supporting employment success for their students. The LCEWD considers customizing a service pending the idea.

In regards to higher education, the WDB has members from the community colleges in the region (Front Range Community College and Aims Community College) as well as from the major four-year institution (Colorado State University) on the Board. They are encouraged to share information about their programs and initiatives to explore possible ways to work together and avoid duplication of efforts.

The LCEWD also supports staff to serve on various advisory boards at the community college level to bring a workforce perspective. Additionally, the BST connects with the community colleges to support their students in connecting to employment.

The Colorado State University Career Center regularly participates in WDB and LCEWD events and the LCEWD has staff that serves on the CSU Career Center Board, ensuring that the tie between the university and the workforce system is strong. The LCEWD also hosts an annual seminar for the Core Career Counseling graduate class.

15. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area; in particular identify how the local area will expand services to dislocated workers utilizing all sources of formula and discretionary funds targeted to the dislocated worker population.

See question B4 for a full analysis and availability of WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker activities. In addition to the Adult and Dislocated Worker formula grants, the LCEWD also administers a variety of education and training grants intended to serve Dislocated Workers. These grants, each targeted toward serving Dislocated Workers, include TEC-P and the Sector Partnership National Emergency Grant (NEG).

Utilizing appropriate co-enrollment service strategies, the LCEWD is able to expand the capacity to serve Dislocated Workers through increased Individual Training Account (ITA) and supportive service access. In addition, TEC-P customers are not required to use training providers on Colorado's Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL), thereby opening up training opportunities not available to them through traditional WIOA formula grants.

The LCEWD currently administers RESEA effective PY17. Customers connected to these initiatives are automatically eligible for Dislocated Worker services. Through these initiatives, the LCEWD has developed orientations that introduce the full array of LCEWD services, including an overview and suggested action steps to consider the additional services provided through the Dislocated Worker program.

16. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities, which description and assessment shall include an identification of successful models of such youth workforce investment activities; in addition, indicate how services to out-of-school youth will be expanded and enhanced to incorporate additional work-based learning opportunities.

The LCEWD provides a wide range of workforce development services for all age ranges, beginning at 14 years of age. The future talent pipeline can begin in these early years as young adults make choices related to their career pathways, and as a result, the LCEWD has a variety of youth services. These activities can be divided into two basic categories: services to all youth ages 14-24 regardless of WIOA eligibility and services to WIOA eligible youth, ages 16-24. All targeted populations are encouraged to integrate into each of the service offerings, including youth with disabilities, youth living in poverty, or youth disconnected from school. The organizational philosophy is to provide access to services to all youth while wrapping intensive services around those most in need. As a result, the LCEWD CareerRise team has a menu of workforce activities including:

CareerRise Program: (i)ndependence begins when we get involved. Serving ages 14-24, the LCEWD's CareerRise programs inspire independence. Helping young action-takers accept more responsibility for early career achievements is the mission. The CareerRise team partners with resources across Larimer County to provide forward-thinking training, employment skills development, paid opportunities, entrepreneurial workshops, and educational assistance for younger job-seekers in our community to serve, work, and excel using their unique talents. Specific services include:

- **Year-Round Employment Support:** Get prepared, get hired. For ages 14-24, youth and young adults can learn skills critical for successful job applications, create winning resumes, interview with ease, and develop overall professionalism in order to earn (and keep) job opportunities. Activities include: workforce preparation workshops, access to youth-friendly employer database, CareerRise newsletters (separate issues for youth and parents) where subscribers receive monthly updates on youth-friendly employers, hiring events, job search tips, and access to meet with a CareerRise team member to obtain customized support to maximize a young adult's job search. Support could include developing a job search plan, resume review,

identifying employment opportunities, application assistance and more. This service is available to all youth.

- **Summer Opportunities:** The Young Entrepreneur Tournament (YET) serves youth ages 18 and younger. This five-part workshop assists in identifying and preparing a business plan and concludes with youth presenting their business plan to local business leaders and competing for a cash award.
Career Road Trips (CRT) for ages 14-24. Take a ride with the Larimer County Economic and Workforce Development Department to experience careers of the future. See behind the scenes of local businesses and get ideas from real professionals on how to get to your dream career. This service is available to all youth.
- **Larimer County Conservation Corps (LCCC):** Through conservation projects and environmental education, the LCCC empowers our corps members to become environmental stewards, while developing self-sufficiency and work preparation skills to help them become productive members of our community. The LCCC is an accredited corps through the Colorado Youth Corps Association.

To date, the LCCC operates four seasonal programs: AgriCorps focuses on local food projects on community farms serving youth 14-16 years of age; the Land program focuses on a variety of conservation projects and serves youth ages 16-19; the Sawyer program manages Pine Beetle kill tree removal and fire mitigation, serving young adults 18-24; and lastly our Water & Energy program provides energy conservation education and audits for residents of Larimer County and serves young adults ages 18-24. **AgriCorps will not be operational in summer of 2018 due to lack of funding.**

Each of the LCCC programs is unique within the corps and each one reflects the core values of environmental conservation and individual development. The majority of work done by LCCC crews is supported through fee-for-service contract dollars and grant funding which may include WIOA placements. This service is available to all youth, through competitive interview selections.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) inCompass Program: Education and employment are everything, but not everyone is on an equal playing field when it comes to how and when these goals are achieved. The Larimer County inCompass team supports a variety of customized services for those, ages 16-24, facing financial and/or other obstacles. Paired with a Career Specialist, youth design a career plan that could include: financial support and training for obtaining a GED, paid work-based learning activities including internships, scholarships for post high school training, intensive career guidance and employment support. See question B.4 for an analysis and availability of WIOA Youth activities.

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

As previously mentioned, the LCEWD has relationships established with the ABE providers in Larimer County. These relationships have been in existence for years. Currently, participants served by both of these partner agencies can be found co-enrolled into the full array of LCEWD services.

18. Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out under this title in the local area with the provision of transportation, including public transportation, and other appropriate supportive services in the local area

The WIOA Center including Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth recently updated the Supportive Service policy to include the provision of transportation assistance. In addition, the total supportive service maximum is \$400 per enrollment year for each participant in accordance to the goals outlined in the IEP/ISS.

Other programs operated within the LCEWD may also provide transportation assistance and/or supportive services as allowable within the specific funding. Transportation assistance may take the form of gas cards, bus passes for public transportation, alternative modes of transportation (i.e., bicycles), car repairs, and other realistic activities that support customers navigating personal and public transportation options to engage and retain employment.

The Fort Collins Chamber of Commerce, a partner of the LCEWD, is conducting extensive efforts related to transportation with specific emphasis on the I-25 corridor. For more information regarding the efforts, check the website at <https://fortcollinschamber.com>. As with all of partnership activities related to transportation and other supportive service activities, the LCEWD actively collaborates and coordinates fund acquisition and service provision as beneficial to the customer and appropriately consistent with the vision and mission of the LCEWD.

19. Provide a description of plans and strategies for, and assurances concerning, maximizing coordination of services provided by the State employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) and services provided in the local area through the one-stop delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.

Plans and strategies for coordinating Wagner-Peyser funding to improve services and avoid duplication fall into three focus areas: (1) streamlining processes for connecting job seekers and employers; (2) coordinating efforts with external organizations that serve job seekers and students; and (3) coordinating efforts with external organizations that serve employers.

The Career Services Team (CST) and Business Services Team (BST), both funded by Wagner-Peyser, have goals that will streamline how to connect job seekers and employers. To this end, each team will coordinate with higher education, school districts, WIOA programs, WIOA mandated partners, community based organizations, and other stakeholders. Within this coordination, the CST will work with these organizations to register their participants and students in Connecting Colorado. This will provide valuable record of their career goals and a method for effectively connecting them with appropriate employment opportunities.

20. Identify the administrator/administrative entity responsible for the disbursement of Title I and III funds in the local area, as determined by the chief elected official or the Governor, and the fiscal agent if different.

At the time of writing this Plan, all Title I programs (WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) are implemented through the Larimer County Economic and Workforce Development Department, as is Title III (Wagner-Peyser) under the auspices of the Larimer County Board of Commissioners.

21. A description of the competitive process to be used to award the sub-grants and contracts in the local area for activities carried out under this title.

Currently, LCEWD does not utilize subcontractors for the provision of services. However, the LCEWD follows both LCEWD and County policies for grant purchases. During PY16, the WDB and Board of County Commissioners selected the LCEWD as the approved vendor of the 14 Youth Elements. The WDB is also working with the County Purchasing Department to outline an approved process for selection of the WIOA one-stop operator for Larimer County.

22. Provide a description of the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official pursuant to section 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the local board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under subtitle B, and the one-stop delivery system, in the local area.

The following WIOA Primary Performance Indicators have been proposed in the Law:

- the percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
- the percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;
- the median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;
- the percentage of program participants that obtained a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent during participation in or within one year after exit from the program. For those participants who obtained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, the participant must also have obtained or retained employment or be in an

education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within one year after exit from the program;

- the percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment;
- the indicator(s) of effectiveness in serving employers.

Per guidance from the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, for purposes of this local plan submission, LCEWD will provide the PY16 Common Measures Goals until which time PY17 Measures have been negotiated.

23. Provide a description of the actions the local board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing board, including but not limited to:

- LWDB Roles:** Identify the role of your Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) and Youth Council/committee in supporting Business Services, Sector Partnerships, Career Pathways, and Work-Based Learning. What actions will they be taking to ensure that these areas are a priority for the local area? What actions and commitments will you ask your LWDB or youth council/ committee members (in particular business members) to make to support these initiatives?

The WDB recognizes the increased focus on business services, sector partnerships, career pathways, and work-based learning and is committed to advance each one at a high level. Current and future support of business services includes relationship building with the private sector and partnership on the annual Workforce Symposium event. Moreover, the WDB will promote the events, programs, and initiatives of the BST to WDB members and guests at the WDB meetings. The WDB does not have a youth committee but retains several youth and young adult experts.

In regards to sector partnerships, the WDB and its Executive Committee have already created regularly occurring agenda items for sector partnerships at the meetings. Additionally, the WDB has encouraged members to also engage in sector partnerships as appropriate, leading to greater cross-over between WDB and sector partnership members. The development of career pathways is predominantly under the auspice of the sector partnerships; however, it is the LCEWD staff that drive the activity on a committee level. That information is shared with the WDB and the community-at-large.

Work-based learning, in its many forms, is supported by the WDB. The WDB has hosted community dialogue about apprenticeships and how they can be successfully deployed in industries other than the trades. As a result of this, a local health provider received additional support for the development of a registered apprenticeship program in Larimer County. The WDB is also looking at ways to further support internships and other work-based learning activities offered in order to augment the outreach and marketing completed by the Business Services Team.

- ii. **LWDB Participation:** Describe how you will market opportunities for participation on your LWDB to businesses in your local area to ensure representation of industry sectors with the greatest labor force demand. Describe how you will maintain a minimum of at least 51% of businesses as active members and participants on your LWDB.

The WDB membership is active in recruiting new members and affiliate participants. Using an ad hoc committee, the WDB has identified both industries and individual firms to target for potential membership. The industries are identified by looking at the where the greatest need is in the community.

The WDB is also exploring ways that it may leverage active sector partnerships to find potential members with a keen workforce focus. Another way the WDB is actively working on private sector member recruitment is by working with local/regional economic development professionals to understand what firms may be expanding, relocating, or those that are facing workforce challenges that they would like to address on a regional level. The key to each one of the strategies is to have an engaged and informed membership so that each individual feels empowered to tap their network for new potential members.

- iii. **Address what steps your board will take towards achieving the benchmarks outlined in the High Performing Workforce Boards Definition**

To achieve the benchmarks outlined in the High Performing Workforce Boards Definition the WDB will:

- Host a WDB member orientation for all members and interested community supporters
- Schedule additional orientation meetings for new members as appropriate throughout the year
- Review the criteria outlined in the High Performing Workforce Boards Definition
- Take and discuss the assessment
- Apply for CWDC financial technical assistance to improve our performance

24. Describe how you will use the Workforce Investment Works (WIW) website to increase the awareness of the services and successes for each of the service areas: business, re-employment, and youth. How will you ensure that your local area posts a minimum of three success stories per quarter on WIW?

Understanding the benefits in building value and demonstrating ROI to stakeholders, LCEWD will continue to post success stories, customer quotes and Innovative processes to the Workforce Investment Works website. This process has been institutionalized within our Economic and Workforce Development Department teams and staff have been assigned to calendar, collect and submit to the Site in an effort to provide a minimum of three entries per quarter.

In addition, we have provided a link on our local website providing customers the opportunity to view testimonials and successes of the Workforce System.

25. Describe the process used by the local board, consistent with subsection (d), to provide an opportunity for public comment, including comment by representatives of businesses and comment by representatives of labor organizations, and input into the development of the local plan, prior to submission of the plan.

When directed by CDLE, and in concert with the Workforce Development Board, LCEWD has established a multi-tiered process for public comment on the local Plan. Notice for public comment is on the Larimer County website as well as on the local LCEWD website including the draft plan narrative. The full draft narrative and executive summary will be available to the Workforce Development Board list serve in preparation for the Board Executive Committee and full Board Review. The Board includes representatives of business and labor organizations. All notifications will be provided to allow for a minimum two (2) week comment period and adjustments to the Plan if necessary based upon the comments. Comments will be collected and reported through a tracking document.