

Nebraska Workforce Development Board

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Hilton Garden Inn Downtown/Haymarket
801 R Street—Husker Rooms 1&2
Lincoln, NE

February 12, 2016
9:00 am - 1:00 pm

Meeting Agenda

1. Call to Order Mark Moravec
2. Roll Call Yvette Montes
3. Notice of Publication Yvette Montes
4. Approval of Minutes* Mark Moravec
5. Old Business
 - A. Board Bylaws* Board Members
 1. Board Committee Structure & Membership Board Members
 - B. Combined State Plan Review* Stan Odenthal & Board Members
6. New Business
 - A. Governor Remarks Governor Pete Ricketts
 - B. Next Board Meeting Mark Moravec
 - ° April 8, 2016
7. Public Comment Mark Moravec
8. Adjournment Mark Moravec

* Requires Motion and Vote

Nebraska Workforce Development Board

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Nebraska Workforce Development Board Meeting Minutes

October 16, 2015

Agenda Item 1: Call to Order

Chairman Mark Moravec called the Nebraska Workforce Development Board (NWDB) meeting to order on October 16, 2015, at 1:16 p.m. at the Hilton Garden Inn Downtown/Haymarket, Husker Rooms 1 & 2, 801 R Street, Lincoln, Nebraska.

Agenda Item 2: Roll Call

Yvette Montes, Recorder, called Roll and a quorum was established.

Members Present (18):

| | | |
|---------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| John Albin | Allan Hale | Michelle Olson |
| Tammie Beck | James Hanson Jr. | Courtney Phillips |
| Bradley Bird | Susan Martin | Terri Ridder |
| Brian Deakin | Senator Heath Mello | Jennifer Sedlacek |
| John Fagot | Mark Moravec | Becky Stitt |
| Michael Geary | Don Nordell | Lisa Wilson |

Members Absent (6):

| | | |
|----------------|------------------------|---------------|
| Matt Blomstedt | Governor Pete Ricketts | Carol Swigart |
| Vern Powers | Bradley Schroeder | Eric Zeece |

Nebraska Department of Labor Staff in Attendance:

Deb Andersen, Policy Coordinator – Employment & Training
Misty Christo, Attorney - Employment & Training
Mary Findlay, Research Analyst – Labor Market Information
Peng Li, Legal Aide – Employment & Training
Joan Modrell, Director - Employment & Training
Yvette Montes, Administrative Assistant/Recorder - Employment & Training
Stan Odenthal, Workforce Services Administrator - Employment & Training
Thomas Ukinski, General Counsel, Legal

Guests in Attendance:

Linda Black, Nebraska Department of Economic Development
Shirley Carlson, Heartland Workforce Solutions
Seth Derner, Vivayic
Jan Norlander-Jensen, City of Lincoln
Erin Porterfield, Heartland Workforce Solutions
Pearl Van Zandt, Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Agenda Item 3: Notice of Publication

Ms. Montes announced the Notice of Public Meeting was duly published in the Lincoln Journal Star, Omaha World Herald, North Platte Telegraph and Scottsbluff Star-Herald in accordance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act. Copies of the Act were available from Legal Counsel or administrative staff.

Agenda Item 4: Approval of Minutes

James Hanson Jr. moved, seconded by Michael Geary, to approve the minutes of the January 23, 2015 meeting. A voice vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Moravec announced meeting agendas, minutes and handouts for the full board and any standing committees, can be found on the website at www.dol.nebraska.gov under the heading "Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)".

Agenda Item 5: New Business

A. Local Workforce Development Board Certifications

Stan Odenthal, Workforce Services Administrator with the Nebraska Department of Labor, cited WIOA Section 107(b) criteria and Section 107(c)(2) requirements, that require the Governor to certify the Local Workforce Development Boards biannually. Local boards submit their board membership recommendations for approval and the Board recommends local board certification to the Governor.

1. Motion to Recommend Greater Omaha Certification

James Hanson Jr. moved, seconded by Brian Deakin, to make a recommendation to the Governor to certify the Greater Omaha local board. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried.

FOR: (18)

John Albin
Tammie Beck
Bradley Bird
Brian Deakin
John Fagot
Michael Geary

Allan Hale
James Hanson Jr.
Susan Martin
Sen. Heath Mello
Mark Moravec
Don Nordell

Michelle Olson
Courtney Phillips
Terri Ridder
Jennifer Sedlacek
Becky Stitt
Lisa Wilson

AGAINST: (0)

ABSENT: (6)

Matt Blomstedt
Vern Powers

Gov. Pete Ricketts
Bradley Schroeder

Carol Swigart
Eric Zeece

2. Motion to Recommend Greater Lincoln Certification

Michael Geary moved, seconded by Lisa Wilson, to make a recommendation to the Governor to certify the Greater Lincoln local board. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried.

FOR: (18)

John Albin
Tammie Beck
Bradley Bird
Brian Deakin
John Fagot
Michael Geary

Allan Hale
James Hanson Jr.
Susan Martin
Sen. Heath Mello
Mark Moravec
Don Nordell

Michelle Olson
Courtney Phillips
Terri Ridder
Jennifer Sedlacek
Becky Stitt
Lisa Wilson

AGAINST: (0)

ABSENT: (6)

Matt Blomstedt
Vern Powers

Gov. Pete Ricketts
Bradley Schroeder

Carol Swigart
Eric Zeece

3. *Motion to Recommend Greater Nebraska Certification*

John Fagot moved, seconded by Becky Stitt, to make a recommendation to the Governor to certify the Greater Nebraska local board. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried.

FOR: (17)

John Albin
Tammie Beck
Bradley Bird
Brian Deakin
John Fagot
Michael Geary

Allan Hale
James Hanson Jr.
Susan Martin
Sen. Heath Mello
Mark Moravec
Don Nordell

Michelle Olson
Courtney Phillips
Terri Ridder
Jennifer Sedlacek
Becky Stitt

AGAINST: (0)

ABSTAIN: (1)

Lisa Wilson

ABSENT: (6)

Matt Blomstedt
Vern Powers

Gov. Pete Ricketts
Bradley Schroeder

Carol Swigart
Eric Zeece

B. *Greater Omaha Local Plan Modification*

Mr. Odenthal cited WIOA Section 134(b)(4) that allows local boards to transfer funds, if such transfer is approved by the Governor, up to and including 100% of the funds allocated to the local area under the Adult or Dislocated Worker programs, between such programs. The Greater Omaha Board submitted a Local Area Plan Modification requesting the transfer of \$500,000 of Dislocated Worker program funds to the Adult program fund with \$295,000 coming from FY15 funds and \$205,000 coming from FY16 funds, effective October 1, 2015.

James Hanson Jr. moved, seconded by Michael Geary, to approve the transfer of funds. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried.

FOR: (18)

John Albin
Tammie Beck
Bradley Bird
Brian Deakin
John Fagot
Michael Geary

Allan Hale
James Hanson Jr.
Susan Martin
Sen. Heath Mello
Mark Moravec
Don Nordell

Michelle Olson
Courtney Phillips
Terri Ridder
Jennifer Sedlacek
Becky Stitt
Lisa Wilson

AGAINST: (0)

ABSENT: (6)

Matt Blomstedt
Vern Powers

Gov. Pete Ricketts
Bradley Schroeder

Carol Swigart
Eric Zeece

C. *Group Discussion Report-Outs*

1. *Bylaws and Board Structure*

James Hanson Jr. reported group recommendations.

- a. Committee Membership
 - i. Any of the standing committees or ad hoc committees should be careful in making recommendations to the executive committees and the full board
 - ii. Difficult getting entire board together due to their various locations around the state
 - iii. Keep in compliance with Open Meetings law when creating bylaws
- b. Local Area Boards
 - i. More involvement with State structure
 - ii. Participation of executive director on standing committees
 - iii. Developing strategies and aligning technology with data systems
 - iv. Using same process and structure for all local areas
 - v. Ability to collaborate with the State
- c. Strategic Function Categories
 - i. Developing career pathways and strategies
 - ii. Developing and expanding strategies for partnerships with in-demand sectors and occupations
- d. Involvement of Local Area Chambers
 - i. Ad hoc or special committee members
 - ii. Request personnel, recruiting and education input
- e. Involvement of One-Stop Delivery Systems
 - i. Participation in meetings and committees
- f. Collaboration with Area Development Associations

2. *Eligible Training Provider Criteria*

James Hanson Jr. reported group recommendations with input from Mark Moravec and Tammie Beck.

- a. Greater Omaha Working on an Accreditation
 - i. Forward material to Greater Lincoln and Greater Nebraska
 - ii. Share their process
- b. Rules and Guidelines
 - i. Governor establishes rules and guidelines for Eligible Training Providers
 - ii. Staff and State staff should approve programs
 - iii. Governor should vet programs
- c. Entities and Providers
 - i. Local area boards better suited to vet entities that provide training opportunities and receive funding
 - ii. Collaborate
 - iii. Local areas would assist in accreditation of the provider after the State has vetted the program
 - iv. Establish a standard operating procedure and/or form that local areas would follow to ensure every area is following the same process or guidelines
- d. Additional Comments
 - i. Mark Moravec – No sense in reinventing the wheel if there's already a process in place like what the Omaha group has done.

- ii. Tammie Beck – In addition to accreditation of the actual institution, review instructor certification to ensure they are qualified and able to facilitate the training effectively.

3. *Economic Regions*

Brian Deakin reported group recommendations with input from Lisa Wilson.

- a. *Boundaries and Commuting Patterns*
 - i. Do boundaries for participation in the different counties still make sense?
 - ii. Focused on maps reflecting commuting patterns from the different counties
 - iii. Potential changes to both the Omaha and Lincoln local areas
 - iv. New Act gives local areas the opportunity to make boundary changes in agreement with the other local areas or keep existing boundaries
 - v. Some support for realignment between Omaha and Lincoln areas that make sense based on commuting patterns
 - vi. Changes are yet to be determined
 - vii. Boundaries were set 15 years ago, what will the growth be 15 years from now?
- b. *Service Providers*
 - i. Examine different regions and areas with the understanding that needs across the state change
 - ii. Certain industries are more densely represented in some regions
- c. *Local Areas Working Together*
 - i. Work together with other local areas
 - ii. Take advantage of synergies
 - iii. Have Omaha work with Iowa and Greater Nebraska work with South Dakota
- d. *Barriers for Funding Realignments*
 - i. Different philosophies
 - ii. Political pressures
 - iii. If able to recommend, would like to see expansion of Lincoln down into the southeast portion of the state
- e. *Population Shifts and Telecommuting*
 - i. Population shifts and growth happening across the state
 - ii. Economy shifts of different areas
 - iii. More people interested in telecommuting
 - iv. If companies opt for telecommuters, how will that affect population growth?

D. *Next Action Items for the Board*

Joan Modrell remarked on pressing issues, Combined State Plan and Board Structure. Announced Combined State Plan due by March 3, 2016 and anticipated first presentable draft available by end of December 2015, to post for public comment. Suggested board approve plan by February 12, 2016 and asked for best communication method to collect their input. Board structure needs to be created. Options will be disseminated based on today's discussions. Board members can participate and offer feedback via webinars.

E. *2016 Board Meeting Schedule*

Chair Moravec announced the 2016 full board meeting dates. Dates are subject to change and additional dates will be added for future standing committee meetings. Board posed no questions or concerns pertaining to the proposed meeting dates and were not required to vote on the schedule.

1. February 12, 2016 - Friday
2. April 8, 2016 - Friday
3. June 17, 2016 - Friday
4. October 21, 2016 - Friday

Agenda Item 6: Adjournment

John Fagot moved, seconded by Bradley Bird, to adjourn the Nebraska Workforce Development Board meeting. A voice vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously. Chairman Moravec declared the meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

10/26/2015
YM

DRAFT

**Nebraska Workforce Development Board
Bylaws**

**ARTICLE I.
NAME AND PURPOSE**

Section 1.1 NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Nebraska Workforce Development Board herein after sometimes referred to as the “NWDB” or the “State Board.”

Section 1.2 OFFICE OF THE NWDB

The principal office of the NWDB shall be located at the office of the Nebraska Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Liaison, currently the Commissioner of Labor, Nebraska Workforce Development, Department of Labor, 550 South 16th Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68509.

Section 1.3 PURPOSE

The purpose of the Nebraska Workforce Development Board shall be to carry out such functions as shall be authorized under Section 101(d) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) (P.L. 113-128) as they may from time to time be amended.

**ARTICLE II.
MEMBERSHIP**

Section 2.1 COMPOSITION OF THE NWDB

In accordance with Section 101(b) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the State Board shall consist of the following members from the following representation categories:

- (a) the Governor;
- (b) a member from the legislature, appointed by the appropriate presiding officers of the legislature;
- (c) members appointed by the Governor, of which—
 - (i) a majority shall be representatives of businesses in the State, who—
 - (I) are owners of business, chief executives or operating officers of businesses, or other business executives or employers with optimum policymaking or hiring authority, and who, in addition, may be members of a local board;
 - (II) represent businesses that provide employment opportunities that include high-quality, work-relevant training and development in in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the State; and

- (III) are appointed from among individuals nominated by State business organizations and business trade associations;
- (ii) no less than twenty (20) percent shall be representatives of the workforce within the State, who—
 - (I) shall include representatives of labor organizations, who have been nominated by State labor federations;
 - (II) shall include a presentative, who shall be a member of a labor organization or a training director, from a joint labor-management apprenticeship program;
 - (III) may include representatives of community-based organizations that have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the employment, training, and education needs of individuals with barriers to employment, including organizations that serve veterans or that provide or support competitive, integrated employment for individuals with disabilities; and
 - (IV) may include representatives of organizations that have demonstrated experience and expertise in addressing the employment, training, and education needs of eligible youth, including representatives of organizations that serve out-of-school youth; and
- (iii) the balance—
 - (I) shall include representatives of government, who—
 - (1) shall include the lead State officials with primary responsibility for the core programs; and
 - (2) shall include chief elected officials (collectively representing both cities and counties, where appropriate); and
 - (II) may include such other representatives and officials as the Governor may designate, such as—
 - (1) the State agency officials from agencies that are One-Stop partners not specified in subclause (I) (including additional One-Stop partners whose programs are covered by the State plan, if any);
 - (2) State agency officials responsible for economic development or juvenile justice programs in the State;
 - (3) Individuals who represent an Indian tribe or tribal organization; and
 - (4) State agency officials responsible for education programs in the State, including chief executive officers of community colleges and other institution of higher education.

Section 2.2 DIVERSE AND DISTINCT REPRESENTATION

The members of the State Board shall represent diverse geographic areas of the State of Nebraska, including urban, rural, and suburban areas.

Section 2.3 NO REPRESENTATION OF MULTIPLE CATEGORIES

No person shall serve as a member for more than one (1) of the categories described in Section 2.1(c)(i), (ii), or (iii).

Section 2.4 EX-OFFICIO MEMBERSHIP

In addition to, and not in derogation of any other authority, title, duty, and privilege of membership, as set forth in these Bylaws, the following members are additionally classified as *ex-officio* members:

- (a) The Governor
- (a) Commissioner of Nebraska Department of Labor,
- (b) Commissioner of Nebraska Department of Education,
- (c) Chief Executive Officer of Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, and
- (d) Director of Nebraska Department of Economic Development.

Section 2.5 VOTING MEMBERSHIP

All members of the State Board shall be voting members.

Section 2.6 APPOINTMENT

- (a) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, the Governor shall make all appointments to the State Board, which shall conform to the requirements of Section 101 of WIOA.
- (b) The presiding officer of the Legislature shall appoint the member of the Legislature appointed to the State board in accordance with Section 2.1(b) of this Article.
- (c) Individuals serving on the State Board who subsequently retire, or no longer hold the position that made them eligible as a board member, may not continue to serve on the State Board as a representative of that segment.

Section 2.7 TERM OF APPOINTMENTS

All Governor-appointed members shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor.

Section 2.8 REMOVAL

- (a) The Governor may remove any member appointed by the Governor at any time for any reason.
- (b) The presiding officer of the Legislature may remove any member appointed by the presiding officer at any time for any reason.

- (c) The State Board may ask the Governor to remove any non-*ex-officio* member of the State Board:
 - (i) by recommendation of any committee, officer, or member of the State Board;
 - (ii) by a majority vote of the full State Board, taken in accordance with Sections 4.5 and 4.6 of Article IV of these Bylaws; and
 - (iii) for good cause, as stated in the motion to request removal and recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- (d) “Good cause” for the request for removal of a non-*ex-officio* member may include, but is not limited to, a member’s unexcused absence from fifty percent (50%) or more of the State Board meetings held in any twelve-month period.

Section 2.9 RESIGNATION

When members deem it necessary to resign from their appointments to the NWDB, members appointed by the Governor shall tender their resignations to the Governor and members appointed by the presiding officer of the Legislature shall tender their resignations to the presiding officer of the Legislature, with copies to the Chair of the NWDB. Such resignation shall be deemed effective upon acceptance of the Governor for Governor-appointed members or by the presiding officer of the Legislature for appointments made by the presiding officer. In the event that the Chair of the NWDB resigns, the Vice-Chair of the NWDB shall serve as Acting Chair until such time as a new Chair is appointed by the Governor.

Section 2.10 VACANCY

In the event of a vacancy, the Governor or the presiding officer of the Legislature, as the case may be, shall appoint another individual to serve, for the remainder of the unexpired term.

Section 2.11 COMPENSATION

Members of the State Board shall not receive compensation for their services, but may be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses directly related to the discharge of the State Board’s affairs.

ARTICLE III. CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Section 3.1 CHAIR

The Governor shall appoint a Chair of the NWDB, who is a representative from business and industry, to serve at the pleasure of the Governor. The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the State Board and appoint chairs and members of all committees and task groups as deemed necessary or desirable unless otherwise specifically provided for within these Bylaws. The NWDB Chair shall represent the State Board and has the authority to speak on its behalf before the

Governor, the Nebraska Legislature, and at all public meetings and functions. The chair shall have the authority to and shall perform such other duties and functions as may be required by the NWDB, its bylaws, applicable state and federal statutes, and regulations.

Section 3.2 VICE-CHAIR

The Governor shall appoint the Vice-Chair who is a representative from business and industry. The Vice-Chair shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor. At the request of, or in the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall perform the duties of the Chair and perform other duties assigned by the Chair. The Vice-Chair shall have authority to perform such other duties and functions as required by the NWDB, its bylaws, and applicable state and federal statutes and regulations.

Section 3.3 ACTING CHAIR

In the event that the Chair and Vice-Chair are going to be absent from a meeting, the Chair shall designate a member of the NWDB as the Acting Chair, who shall preside at such meeting only.

Section 3.4 VACANCIES

Vacancies in the offices of Chair or Vice-Chair shall be filled by the Governor's appointment.

ARTICLE IV. MEETING PROCEDURES, VOTING RIGHTS, AND QUORUM

Section 4.1 MEETING TIME AND PLACE

The NWDB shall hold meetings at least annually, with the number of meetings, dates, and places to be determined by the NWDB. Additional meetings may be held at the call of the Governor, Chair of the NWDB, or Executive Committee.

Section 4.2 MEETING NOTICE

- (a) Notice of meetings. Notice of all meetings that require public notice shall be in compliance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act, sections 84-1408 et seq. Nebraska Revised Statutes. Written notice of each such meeting shall be sent to members prior to the scheduled meeting along with a copy of the proposed minutes of the previous meeting. The notice shall specify the time, date, location, and proposed agenda for the meeting.
- (b) Notice of absences. A member that is unable to attend a scheduled meeting shall give notice of his or her absence, at least twenty-four hour before the meeting. Notice shall be provided to the Chair of NWDB, or to such individual as the Chair may designate.

Section 4.3 ANNUAL MEETING

On an annual basis, the State Board will review the Annual Report to the Secretary of Labor. The agenda shall include any additional business to be conducted.

Section 4.4 PUBLIC MEETINGS

All meetings of the NWDB and its committees shall be conducted in accordance with the Nebraska Public Meetings law, sections 84-1408 et seq. Nebraska Revised Statutes.

Section 4.5 CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

- (a) Unless the State Board, by a majority vote, directs otherwise, the order of business in regular meetings shall be:
 - (i) Call to Order,
 - (ii) Roll Call,
 - (iii) Documentation of Compliance with Notice Requirements,
 - (iv) Approval of Minutes,
 - (v) Old Business,
 - (vi) New Business,
 - (vii) Time and Place for Next State Board Meeting, and
 - (viii) Adjournment.
- (b) Non-members of the NWDB shall be permitted to comment on any agenda item(s) at such time as “public comment” is solicited by the presiding officer, which, in any event, shall occur at least once prior to the time that any formal action is taken on the item. Non-members may also submit written comments on any agenda item(s), which comments shall be made a part of the permanent record of the meeting. The presiding officer, unless otherwise prescribed by rules adopted by majority vote, may in his/her discretion, limit the amount of time for discussion on any particular agenda item, which limit shall be announced at the time that the agenda item is brought up for discussion.
- (c) Each voting member present shall be allowed to cast one vote.
- (d) The rules contained in the current edition of Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern the conduct of the State Board’s meetings unless those rules are inconsistent with law, these Bylaws, or they are waived by a majority vote.

Section 4.6 MANNER OF VOTING

The voting on all questions duly moved and seconded shall be by roll call vote. No question shall be deemed to have passed unless it has received a majority vote of the quorum present. Proxy voting is not permitted.

Section 4.7 QUORUM

A majority of Governor-appointed voting members shall constitute a quorum, except as otherwise provided by law. Non-members may not be seated at the State Board as a representative of a member, nor shall any such representative be counted for purposes of determining a quorum.

Section 4.8 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- (a) All members shall comply with the provisions of §§49-1499 through 49-14,103.03 Nebraska Revised Statutes.
- (b) No NWDB member may receive anything of value as a result of a benefit conferred by the NWDB upon any person, business or organization.
- (c) A State Board member must disclose with particularity the nature and extent of any financial interest in or affiliation with any person, business or organization that is seeking anything of value from the NWDB prior to consideration of the request by the State Board. A disclosure period will be provided to the members.
- (d) When a potential conflict exists, the State Board Member must prepare a written statement describing the matter requiring action or decision and the nature of the potential conflict, and if he or she will not abstain from voting, deliberating, or taking other action on the matter, the statement shall state why, despite the potential conflict, he or she intends to vote or otherwise participate; and deliver a copy of the statement to the Board Chair, who shall cause the statement to be filed as a matter of public record.
- (e) No member shall vote on a question in which he or she has a direct or indirect personal or pecuniary interest not common to other members of the NWDB. The member of the State Board may abstain from voting, deliberating, or taking other action on the matter on which the potential conflict exists. The minutes of the meeting shall record compliance with this requirement. The interested member may briefly state his or her position regarding the subject or may answer questions of other members, since his or her knowledge may be of assistance.
- (f) All members shall comply with Section 101(f) of WIOA, which states:

(f) Conflict of Interest.--A member of a State board may not--

(1) vote on a matter under consideration by the State board--

(A) regarding the provision of services by such member (or by an entity that such member represents); or

(B) that would provide direct financial benefit to such member or the immediate family of such member; or

(2) engage in any other activity determined by the Governor to constitute a conflict of interest as specified in the State plan.

ARTICLE V. COMMITTEES

Section 5.1 CREATION OF COMMITTEES

- (a) There shall be an Executive Committee, and two subcommittees of the State Board: 1) System Alignment Committee, and 2) Strategic Direction Committee.
- (b) The Governor or the NWDB Chair may create special committees, ad hoc committees, task forces, or similarly designated groups, as he or she deems necessary or desirable.

Section 5.2 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

The Chair of the NWDB shall serve as Chair of the Executive Committee. The Chairs of all other committees shall be representatives of business appointed by the Chair of the NWDB.

Section 5.3 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS

- (a) The Governor may designate members of the Executive Committee at any time after the execution of these Bylaws. A majority of Executive Committee members will represent business. Said members are to include:
 - (i) Chair of NWDB
 - (ii) Vice Chair of NWDB
 - (iii) Chair of each subcommittee
 - (iv) Representative of labor category
 - (v) Representative of youth category
 - (vi) Commissioner of Nebraska Department of Labor
 - (vii) Commissioner of Nebraska Department of Education
 - (viii) Three representatives from the general membership
- (b) The Chair of the NWDB shall appoint the members to all other standing committees from the general membership of the State Board.
- (c) Non-NWDB members may be appointed to subcommittees, special committees, ad hoc committees, task forces, or similarly designated groups, created pursuant to Article V, Section 5.1(b).

Section 5.4 VOTING RIGHTS

- (a) Only NWDB members appointed to serve on any committee, subcommittee, special committees, ad hoc committees, task forces, or similarly designated groups pursuant to Article V, Section 5.1(b) shall have voting rights on those committees.
- (b) All actions or recommendations by committees or by groups created pursuant to Article V, Section 5.1(b) shall be by a majority vote of the quorum present.

Section 5.5 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

NWDB members, who are appointed in accordance with Article II, Section 2.1(c)(i), may serve on more than one committee, subcommittee, special committee, ad hoc committee, task force, or other group that currently exists or that may be created by the Governor or the NWDB Chair, as provided in Article V, Section 5.1(b).

Section 5.6 COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- (a) Committees, subcommittees, special committees, or groups created pursuant to Article V, Section 5.1(b) shall meet on an “as needed” basis subject to the call of the Chair of the NWDB and/or the committee or group Chair.
- (b) When required by Nebraska Open Meetings Act, notice of all meetings shall be in accordance with the Nebraska Open Meetings Act, sections 84-1408 et seq. Nebraska Revised Statutes. Written notice of each meeting shall be sent to members prior to the scheduled meeting along with a copy of the proposed minutes of the previous meeting. The notice shall specify the time, date, location, and proposed agenda for the meeting.
- (c) Pursuant to the Nebraska Open Meetings Act, section 84-1409(1)(b) subcommittees created under these bylaws, including the System Alignment Committee and the Strategic Direction Committee, can take no formal action, have no policy making authority, and shall not be considered public bodies for the purposes of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act.

Section 5.7 CONDUCT OF MEETINGS

Provisions of sections 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, and 4.8 of Article IV herein apply to the conduct of committee meetings.

Section 5.8 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

There shall be an Executive Committee consisting of members appointed by the Governor in accordance with Section 5.3 of this Article. The Executive Committee shall have the authority to act on behalf of the NWDB on issues that require action between scheduled State Board meetings, and may exercise such other powers and perform such other duties or functions as may be authorized by a majority vote of the State Board. The Executive Committee, as a public body, is subject to Nebraska’s Open Meetings Act, sections 84-1408 et seq.

Section 5.9 SYSTEM ALIGNMENT COMMITTEE

There shall be a System Alignment Committee consisting of members appointed by the Chair in accordance with Section 5.3 of this Article. The System Alignment Committee shall be a subcommittee of the State Board. This subcommittee shall be assigned duties and responsibilities associated with Allocation Formulas, the Roles and Resources associated with One-Stop Partners,

Continuous System Improvement, Policy Alignment, Technology Solutions, Statewide Labor Marker Information Systems, State Combined Plan, Public Sector Partnerships, System-related Grant Applications, Review of Local Area Plans, and other duties as assigned by the Chair of the State Board. The System Alignment Committee, as a subcommittee of the State Board, is not subject to Nebraska's Open Meetings Act, sections 84-1408 et seq. for it does not hold hearings, make policy, or take formal action on behalf of the State Board.

Section 5.10 STRATEGIC DIRECTION COMMITTEE

There shall be a Strategic Direction Committee consisting of members appointed by the Chair in accordance with Section 5.3 of this Article. The Strategic Direction Committee shall be a subcommittee of the State Board. This subcommittee shall be assigned duties and responsibilities associated with Employer Engagement, Industry-focused Sector Strategies, Career Pathways, Connecting Workforce Efforts, Regional Plans, Workforce-related Grant Applications, and other duties as assigned by the Chair of the State Board. The Strategic Direction Committee, as a subcommittee of the State Board, is not subject to Nebraska's Open Meetings Act, sections 84-1408 et seq. for it does not hold hearings, make policy, or take formal action on behalf of the State Board.

ARTICLE VI AMENDMENTS

Section 6.1 AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended or repealed by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at any regular or special meeting of the State Board.

Section 6.2 WRITTEN NOTICE

Written notice of proposed changes to these Bylaws shall be sent to members at least ten days in advance of the meeting at which they are to be acted upon. Such notice shall include both the proposed change and the section that it supersedes.

ARTICLE VII SUSPENSION OF BYLAWS

Section 7.1 SUSPENSION OF BYLAWS

The State Board may, by a vote of two-thirds of the members present, suspend all or any part of these Bylaws when to do so would not be in conflict with the laws of the State of Nebraska or applicable federal laws.

**ARTICLE VIII
EFFECTIVE DATE**

Section 8.1 EFFECTIVE DATE

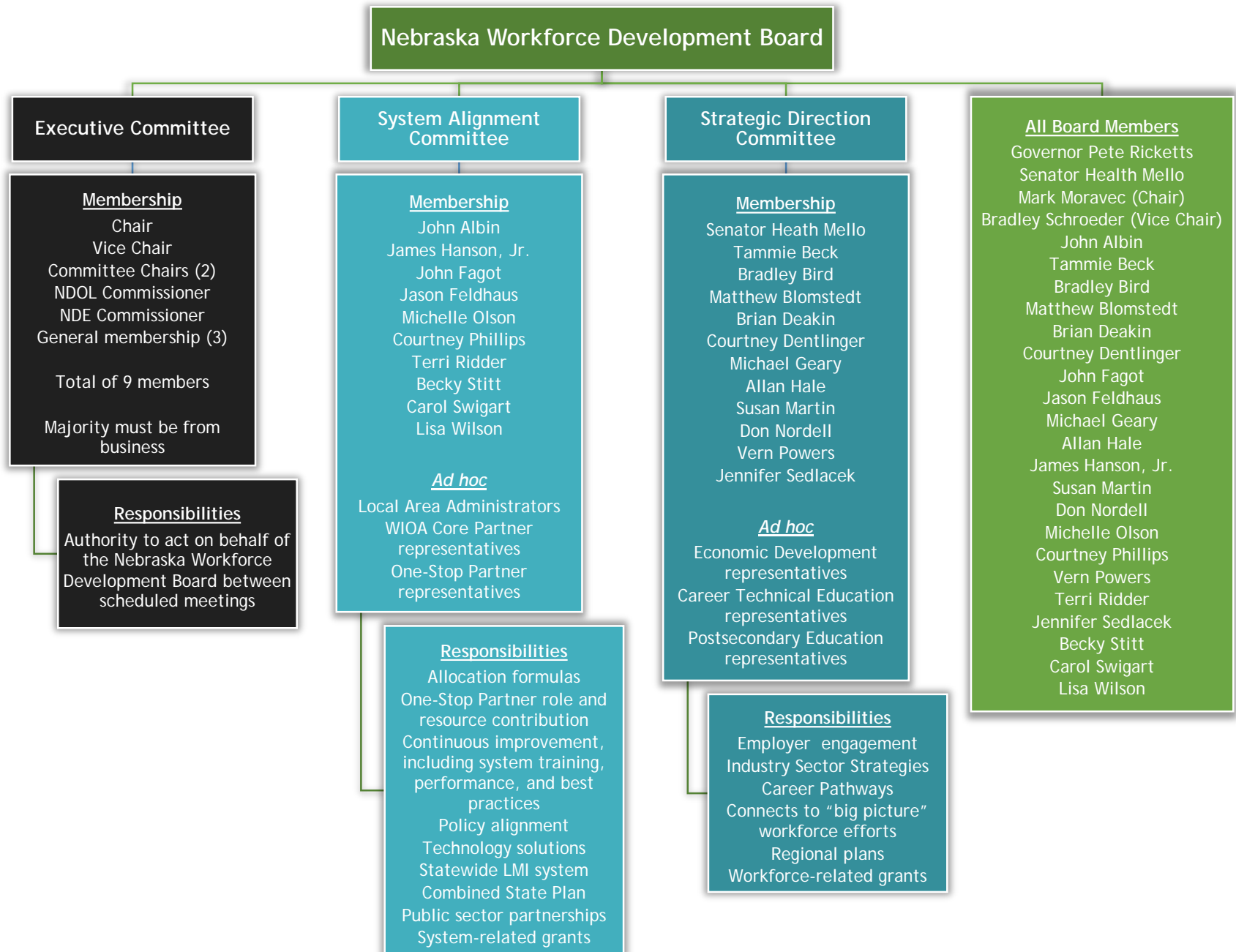
These Bylaws shall become effective immediately upon approval of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present at the meeting of the State Board.

Notice of these Bylaws was sent to the members of the State Board on _____, 2016. These Bylaws of the Nebraska Workforce Development Board were adopted by a vote of _____ () in favor, _____ () opposition, and _____ () abstaining, the same constituting more than two-thirds of those members of the State Board present on _____, 2016, at the regular meeting of the Nebraska Workforce Development Board.

_____ Chair

DRAFT

NWDB Standing Committees



**Motion to Approve the Bylaws of the Nebraska Workforce
Development Board**
February 12, 2016 Meeting of the
Nebraska Workforce Development Board (NWDB)

Approval of Board Bylaws, Agenda Item 5(a)

Background: The purpose of the Nebraska Workforce Development Board shall be to carry out such functions as shall be authorized under Section 101(d) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) (P.L. 113-128) as they may from time to time be amended. Written bylaws are essential to ensure that the Board will operate effectively and meet its assigned responsibilities and requirements under WIOA. The proposed bylaws outline the functions and responsibilities of the Board and its members, the roles and duties of the Board officers, the structure of the Board and its subcommittees, and the conduct of meetings.

It is proposed that the Nebraska Workforce Development Board approve these bylaws.

The State recommends approval of the motion.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Combined State Plan

NEBRASKA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

FEBRUARY 12, 2016



PLAN REQUIREMENTS UNDER WIOA

- WIOA requires a State Governor to submit a Unified or Combined State Plan for approval every four years in order to receive funds under the core workforce development programs.
- Modifications to these plans must be submitted at least every two years updating relevant economic and labor market information.
- The Combined State Plan requirements are designed to improve service integration and ensure that the State's publicly-funded workforce system helps all jobseekers obtain the skills needed to secure good jobs while providing businesses with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy.

NEBRASKA'S PLAN PARTNERS

Core Partners (Required Programs):

- Title I: Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker programs (NDOL)
- Wagner-Peyser Act, Employment services program (NDOL)
- Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program (NDE)
- Vocational Rehabilitation program consisting of the Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation and the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (NDE and NCBVI)

Additional Plan Partners

- Unemployment Insurance (NDOL)
- Jobs for Veterans State Grant (NDOL)
- Trade Adjustment Assistance Act program (NDOL)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (DHHS)
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (DHHS)
- Career Technical Education (NDE)

COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS

- Since February 2015, the Core Partners have held team planning meetings on a regular basis (every other week).
- In collaboration with the Core Partners, NDOL hosted 3 Focus Group sessions in 6 locations to discuss workforce system building topics, over 250 attendees participated
 - July 29th – Lincoln
 - August 13th – Grand Island, Norfolk, North Platte, and Scottsbluff
 - August 20th – Omaha
- A Core Partner “Kickoff” meeting with field management teams was held in Grand Island on August 12th
- Planning regions/local area designations consultations were held with local chief elected officials and board members from all three local areas.

COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS

- On September 17, 2015 the Departments of Labor, Education, and Economic Development hosted a “Sector Strategies – Next Generation” meeting.
- On September 18, 2015 the Core Partners held a planning session on the Combined State Plan.
- On October 28, 2015 One-Stop Partners were invited to meet and discuss potential participation in the Combined State Plan.

NEBRASKA'S COMBINED STATE PLAN

- Nebraska's Combined State Plan describes how the State will develop and implement a unified, integrated service delivery system amongst plan partners.
- The draft of Nebraska's Combined State Plan is currently in a 30 day comment period, which is set to end on February 18, 2016.
- A public hearing was held on February 5, 2016 to receive comments. This hearing was made available at 10 additional locations throughout the state via video conferencing.
- The Combined State Plan must be submitted to the federal government by April 1, 2016.

PLAN ORGANIZATION

Strategic Elements

- Includes analyses of Nebraska's economic conditions, workforce characteristics, and workforce development activities.

Operational Planning Elements

- Identifies Nebraska's efforts to support the strategic vision and goals identified in the Strategic Elements section.

Program-Specific Requirements

- Program specific requirements as outlined by federal government.

VISION

- **Dual Customer Focus:**
 - **Employers**
 - Furnish employers with the skilled workforce they desperately need to grow and thrive in a global economy.
 - Maintaining a strong understanding of employers' specific workforce needs and developing proactive strategies that respond to these needs with timely and targeted interventions
 - **Job Seekers**
 - Seamlessly administer services to jobseekers at all stages of the employment spectrum.
 - Ensuring that employers and job seekers within Nebraska are provided with an environment that meets their unique workforce needs.
- **Strong Communication**
 - Between partnering programs and other workforce development entities in order to streamline services and foster coordinated strategies to meet the needs of the workforce system's primary customers, employers and workers.
- **Collaboration**
 - Partnering programs will leverage the collective resources of the state's workforce partners as a whole

GOALS

- Goal 1: Enhanced Coordination between the Plan Partners
- Goal 2: Strengthened alignment between education and/or training and industry priority and need
- Goal 3: Increased Workforce Participation
- Goal 4: Promote self-sufficiency among low-income and other disadvantaged populations

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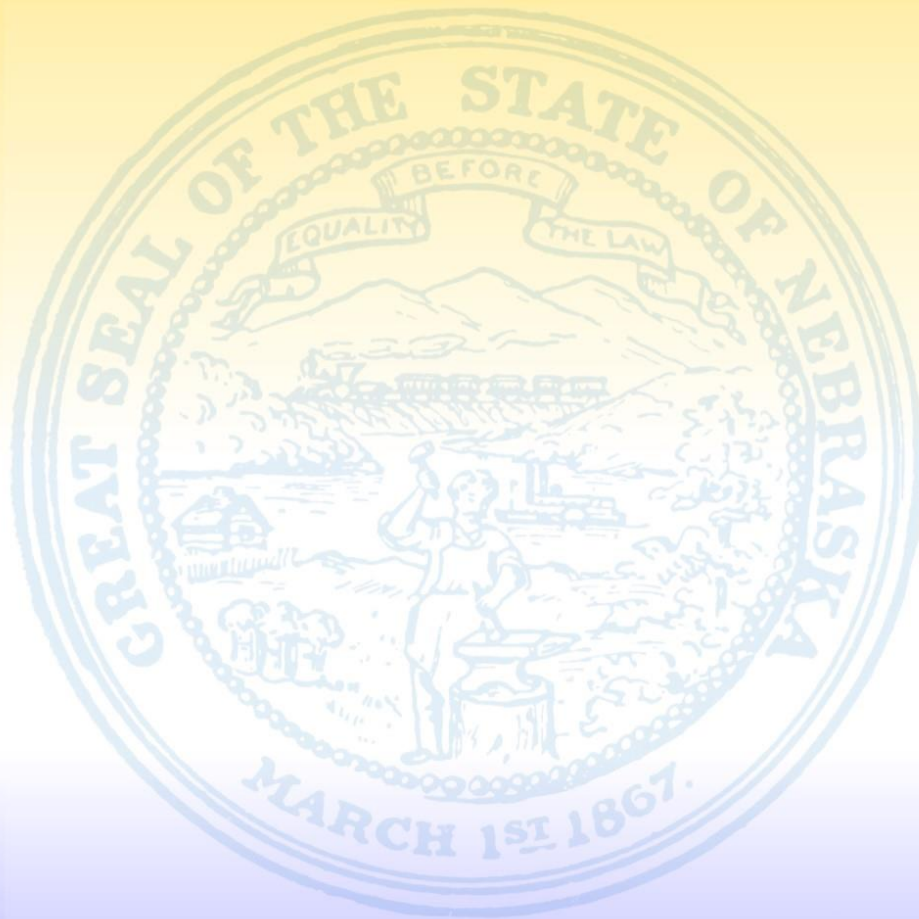
Bob Deaton

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State of Nebraska



Combined State Plan for Nebraska's Workforce System

July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2020

Disclaimer: This draft version of the Combined State Plan for Nebraska's Workforce System is not to be considered final. All content herein is subject to change based on public comment and any subsequent Federal guidance.

How to Provide Comments

The Nebraska Department of Labor, Nebraska Department of Education, Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired, and Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services have released this Combined State Plan in compliance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, and are seeking public comment for a thirty (30) day period.

This plan is accessible online at <http://dol.nebraska.gov/>. Comments for the plan may be made electronically or during a scheduled public hearing. Comments submitted electronically should be sent to ndol.wioa_policy@nebraska.gov.

A public hearing will be held on February 5, 2016 at 11:00 a.m. CST at the Nebraska State Office Building, 14th and M Street, Lincoln, 6th Floor, Nebraska VR Conference Room. This hearing will be simultaneously made available at Nebraska VR locations across the state through interactive video conferencing technology. These locations include:

Columbus – 3100 23rd Street, Suite 5
Fremont – 827 North D Street
Grand Island – 203 E. Stolley Park Road, Suite B
Kearney – 315 W. 60th Street, Suite 400
Lincoln – 3901 N. 27th Street, Suite 6
Norfolk - 1212 Benjamin Ave.
North Platte - 200 South Silber, Bldg., 2,
Omaha - 1313 Farnam on the Mall
Omaha - 12011 Q Street
Scottsbluff – 505A Broadway, Suite 500

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Equal Opportunity Employer/Program TDD: (800) 833-7352. If accommodations are needed, please contact Yvette Montes at (402) 471-9737.

Comments are due February 18, 2016.

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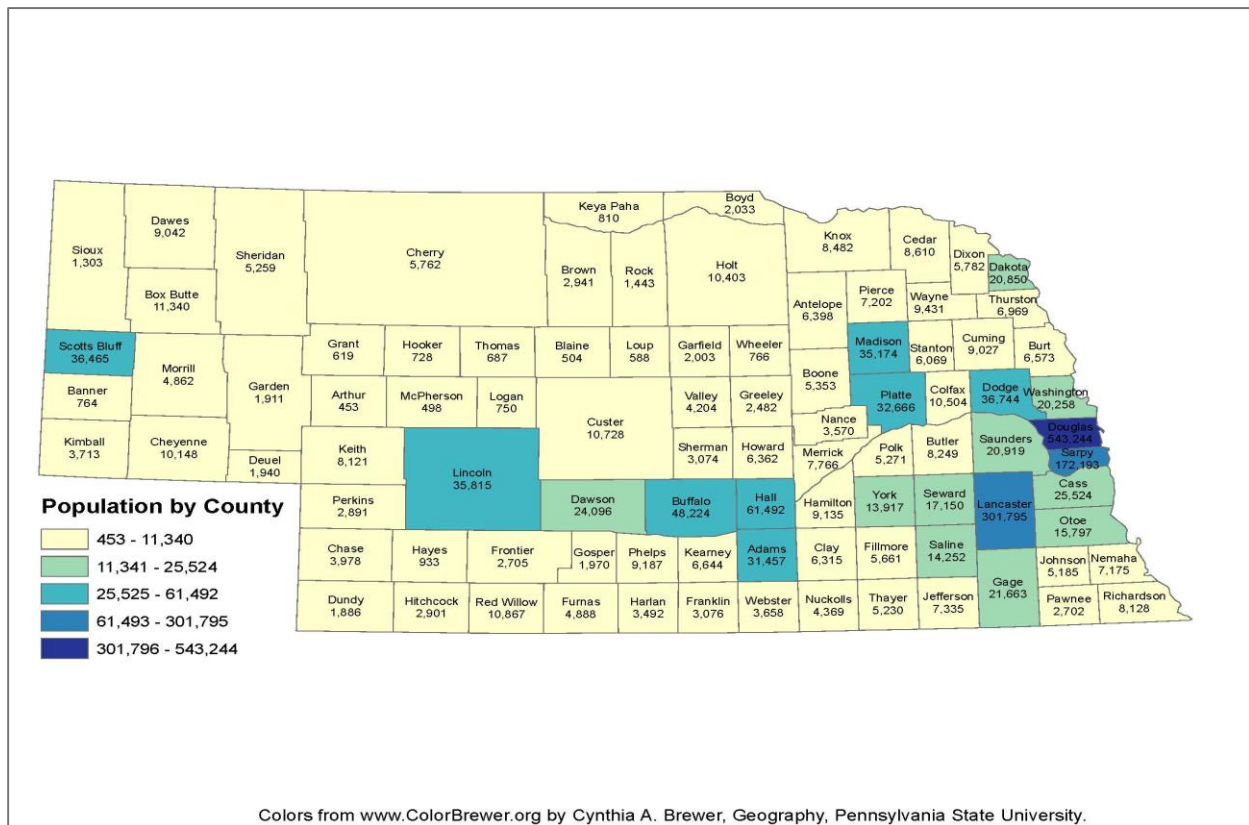
I. WIOA STATE PLAN TYPE

The State of Nebraska has elected to adopt a Combined State Plan for its Workforce System. The plan, which follows, represents the collective planning, resources and vision of the six core workforce development programs (i.e., the Adult, Dislocated, and Youth Programs; the Wagner-Peyser Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Program and the Vocational Rehabilitation Program comprised of Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation and the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired). In addition to the Core Partners, the following programs are also participating in the combined plan: Jobs for Veterans State Grant, Unemployment Insurance, Senior Community Service Employment Program, Trade Assistance Act, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Career Technical Education, and Migrant Seasonal Farmworker Program. Each of these entities was an active participant during the planning which occurred over the course of the past year and are fully committed to participate in the implementation of Nebraska Combined State Plan.

II. STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

Situated in America's heartland, the State of Nebraska is comprised of 77,358 square miles which makes it the 16th largest state in terms of sheer geographic area. In 2014, Nebraska's population was estimated at 1,881,503 residents using 1-year estimates from the American Community Survey, which places Nebraska 37 out of 50 states. Nearly 40% of the state's population was

Illustration 1: Nebraska Population Density by County



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, 2014.

concentrated in the metropolitan areas of Omaha, Lincoln and South Sioux City (*American Community Survey, 1-year estimates, 2014*).

Nebraska is a state that offers the very best in both rural and urban living, a range of industries and occupations providing employment opportunities, a cost of living index that ranked 9th in the nation during the 3rd quarter of 2015 (*Council for Community and Economic Research*), a workforce that is well-regarded for its strong work ethic, appealing tax incentives for new and existing businesses, and several unique regions and areas that contribute to the state's economic climate. Simultaneously, in this ever-changing 21st economy, Nebraska struggles like many states to provide all of its residents with meaningful and gainful employment opportunities.

Nebraska's workforce system is driven by several telling pieces of data, shared throughout the enclosed economic and workforce analysis, that reveal some troubling gaps and trends in Nebraska's economy and workforce. Most illustrative through these data are (1) the extremely high number of underemployed workers within the state who earn less than a living wage or must hold two or more jobs in order to earn a living wage; (2) the plight of disadvantaged workers such as low-income individuals; individuals with disabilities; ex-offenders; homeless individuals; youth who have aged out of the foster care system; English Language Learners; individuals with low levels of literacy; single parents; farmworkers; those within two years of exhausting lifetime TANF eligibility; and the long-term unemployed; and (3) the need for a pipeline of workers with the technical skills and work readiness skills desired by employers, including those in industries that will drive Nebraska's economy well into the future.

(a) Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analysis

(1) Economic and Workforce Analysis

(A) Economic Analysis

Gross Domestic Product, Personal Income, Inflation Data from the Bureau of Economic Analysis show that the current-dollar gross domestic product (GDP) for Nebraska in 2014 was \$112.2 billion, up slightly from \$109.4 billion in 2013. Over this time period, Nebraska real GDP grew 0.7% in 2014 while the 2013-2014 national change was 2.2%. Real GDP for the Lincoln Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) has increased steadily since a slight dip in 2008 and currently stands at just over \$16 billion. GDP for the Omaha MSA has been increasing since 2010, and in 2014 the real GDP in Omaha was \$52.7 billion. The Sioux City MSA has been fluctuating for over the past decade but had experienced an increase from \$7.85 billion in 2013 to \$7.86 billion in 2014 (*Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2015*).

Personal income in Nebraska has increased steadily since experiencing a slight dip in 2009. Total Personal Income (TPI) in Nebraska for 2014 was \$89.5 billion which ranked 36th in the United States. In 2014, Nebraska ranked 18th in per capita personal income (PCPI) at \$47,557, which was 103% of the national average and represented an increase of 2.8% from 2013. In September 2015, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the Midwest urban region was 225.184 which was lower than the U.S. city average CPI (237.945) (*Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2015*).

(i-ii) Existing and Emerging Demand Industry Sectors

From 2010 to 2014, employment in the Trade, Transportation and Utilities industry (comprised of wholesale trade, retail trade, transportation and warehousing) in Nebraska steadily increased annually. Similarly, over the same period, the Educational and Health Services industry employment increased steadily. Employment in the Manufacturing industry, the Finance industry, and the Professional and Business Services industry also increased annually since 2010. From 2010 to 2014, the Leisure and Hospitality industry also experienced employment gains annually. Other industries in Nebraska have had employment fluctuations from 2010 to 2014. The Natural Resources and Mining and Construction industry employment decreased in 2011 from 2010, but increased every year since. Employment in the Information industry, which includes the broadcasting, telecommunications and data processing industries, peaked in 2012 but has declined each following year. Government and Other Services jobs declined in 2011 compared to 2010, but jobs in both industries increased annually from 2011 to 2014 (*NEworks, Data Download Center: Projections Data Files, 2015*).

Industry projections across all Nebraska industries show total growth of 9.54% through 2022. This includes annual growth of .92% and an employment change of 102,252 job openings (i.e., from 1,071,406 jobs in 2012 to an anticipated 1,173,658 jobs in 2022). (*Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, Projections, 2016*). The enclosed table details Nebraska's top 12 industries in terms of 2022 projected total employment. The industry with the most projected employment in 2022 is Health Care and Social Assistance with an anticipated 1156,933 jobs, a figure that represents 13.4% of all projected Nebraska jobs in 2022. Other high-employment industries, in terms of sheer numbers of jobs, include retail trade, educational services, and manufacturing.

Table 1: Industry Projections, 2012-2022

| Industry | 2012 Estimated Employment | 2022 Projected Employment | Total 2012-2022 Employment Change | Annual Avg. Percent Change | Total Percent Change |
|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Total, All Industries | 1,071,406 | 1,173,658 | 102,252 | 0.92% | 9.54% |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 132,514 | 156,933 | 24,419 | 1.71% | 18.43% |
| Retail Trade | 105,261 | 110,728 | 5,467 | 0.51% | 5.19% |
| Educational Services | 99,114 | 109,097 | 9,983 | 0.96% | 10.07% |
| Manufacturing | 94,773 | 101,315 | 6,542 | 0.67% | 6.90% |
| Accommodation and Food Services | 71,323 | 79,979 | 8,656 | 1.15% | 12.14% |
| Finance and Insurance | 61,801 | 66,880 | 5,079 | 0.79% | 8.22% |
| Transportation and Warehousing | 51,198 | 58,420 | 7,222 | 1.33% | 14.11% |
| Construction | 42,192 | 52,805 | 10,613 | 2.27% | 25.15% |
| Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services | 42,487 | 51,912 | 9,425 | 2.02% | 22.18% |

COMBINED STATE PLAN FOR NEBRASKA'S WORKFORCE SYSTEM

| | | | | | |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services | 44,937 | 50,310 | 5,373 | 1.14% | 11.96% |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting | 50,183 | 44,723 | -5,460 | -1.15% | -10.88% |
| Wholesale Trade | 41,236 | 43,004 | 1,768 | 0.42% | 4.29% |
| <i>Source: Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, Projections</i> | | | | | |

High-Wage, High-Skill, High-Demand (H3)

In recent years, the Nebraska Departments of Labor and Education in partnership with the Nebraska Department of Economic Development have focused their respective efforts towards existing and emerging occupations which meet certain high-wage, high-skill and high-demand criteria. Known as H3 occupations, these occupations are considered high-wage when at least half of their wage measures are at or above the regional average for all occupations. Occupations that require some college, no degree or a higher level of educational attainment are high-skill, and these include occupations that require a high school diploma or equivalent plus long-term on-the-job training, an apprenticeship, or internship/residency. The number of annual openings, net change in employment, and growth rate determine whether an occupation is high-demand. While Nebraska's economy has historically been driven by agriculture, several industries within the state have emerged recently to also offer tremendous employment opportunities. Using an H3-driven approach, Nebraska is working to place unemployed workers in training programs leading to H3 jobs that pay above Nebraska \$9.13 median wage.

Using data for the week ending December 28, 2015, the top H3 occupations in the state, ranked by the number of then-current openings, were Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers (45 openings); Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics (32); Registered Nurses (23); First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers (15); Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists (11); Computer User Support Specialists (10); Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics (8); Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters (7); Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses (6); and Electricians (6). (*H3 Website H3 Demand Report, December 28, 2015*).

As shown in the enclosed table that follows, the top H3 occupations in terms of the projected number of jobs includes Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers; Registered Nurses; General and Operations Managers; Carpenters; Accountants and Auditors; Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education; Maintenance and Repair Workers, General; Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education; Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses; and Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters. These occupations are projected to experience growth ranging from 7.8% to 23.2%. As previously stated, each of these occupations meets the criteria of an H3 job and represent a diverse array of career options (*H3 Website, H3 Demand Report 2015*). Subsequently, these professions offer an attractive wage and provide jobseekers with a range of rewarding career options within the state.

Table 2: Employment Projections for H3 Occupations by 2022 Estimated Employment

| SOC Code | Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) Title | 2012 Estimated Employment | 2022 Estimated Employment | Percent Change |
|----------|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| 53-3032 | Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers | 27,997 | 32,713 | 16.8% |
| 29-1141 | Registered Nurses | 22,053 | 24,792 | 12.4% |
| 11-1021 | General and Operations Managers | 11,091 | 12,425 | 12.0% |
| 47-2031 | Carpenters | 9,783 | 12,057 | 23.2% |
| 13-2011 | Accountants and Auditors | 9,848 | 11,171 | 13.4% |
| 25-2021 | Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education | 9,683 | 10,659 | 10.1% |
| 49-9071 | Maintenance and Repair Workers, General | 8,375 | 9,029 | 7.8% |
| 25-2031 | Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education | 7,681 | 8,451 | 10.0% |
| 29-2061 | Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses | 6,287 | 7,678 | 22.1% |
| 47-2152 | Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters | 5,462 | 6,097 | 11.6% |

Source: H3 Website, H3 Demand Report.

In looking specifically at those H3 jobs projected to experience the most growth percentage-wise through 2022, the enclosed table details the top 10 fastest growing occupations. It should be noted that several of these occupations, while fast-growing, are expected to add relatively low numbers of jobs to the economy.

Table 3: Fastest Growing H3 Occupations by Percent Growth Through 2022

| SOC Code | Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) Title | Percent Growth | 2012 Estimated Employment | 2022 Estimated Employment |
|----------|---|----------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 31-2011 | Occupational Therapy Assistants | 45.1% | 111 | 161 |
| 29-2091 | Orthotists and Prosthetists | 41.9% | 93 | 132 |
| 47-2132 | Insulation Workers, Mechanical | 41.5% | 106 | 150 |
| 31-2021 | Physical Therapist Assistants | 36.5% | 668 | 912 |
| 51-4012 | Computer Numerically Controlled Machine Tool Programmers, Metal and Plastic | 35.2% | 145 | 196 |
| 15-1122 | Information Security Analysts | 33.7% | 493 | 659 |

COMBINED STATE PLAN FOR NEBRASKA'S WORKFORCE SYSTEM

| | | | | |
|---------|------------------------------|-------|-----|-------|
| 29-1071 | Physician Assistants | 33.1% | 850 | 1,131 |
| 39-5094 | Skincare Specialists | 32.1% | 380 | 502 |
| 15-2031 | Operations Research Analysts | 31.8% | 239 | 315 |
| 29-1181 | Audiologists | 30.5% | 128 | 167 |

Source: NEworks, Data Download Center: Projections Data Files, 2015.

In looking specifically at those H3 occupations expected to experience the most annual openings as a result of new growth and replacement openings, Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers are expected to add an average of 920 jobs each year through 2022, followed by Registered Nurses which are anticipated to average 702 openings per year. These occupations are followed by Accountants and Auditors; Carpenters; General and Operations Managers; Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education; Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses; Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education; Maintenance and Repair Workers, General; and Industrial Machinery Mechanics. As H3-designated occupations, annual salaries within these occupations range from \$35,235 for Carpenters to as much as \$109,991 for General and Operations Managers (*NEworks, Data Download Center: Projections Data Files, 2015*).

Table 4: Top H3 Occupations with Annual Openings, Annual Salary, and Current Hourly Entry Wage

| SOC Code | Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) Title | Average Annual Openings | Average Annual Salary | Average Hourly Wage |
|----------|--|-------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 53-3032 | Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers | 920 | \$43,201 | \$20.77 |
| 29-1141 | Registered Nurses | 702 | \$58,726 | \$28.24 |
| 13-2011 | Accountants and Auditors | 424 | \$67,183 | \$32.30 |
| 47-2031 | Carpenters | 347 | \$35,235 | \$16.94 |
| 11-1021 | General and Operations Managers | 341 | \$109,991 | \$52.88 |
| 25-2021 | Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education | 311 | \$50,560 | N/A |
| 29-2061 | Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses | 293 | \$39,553 | \$19.01 |
| 25-2031 | Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education | 286 | \$51,919 | N/A |

| | | | | |
|---|---|-----|----------|---------|
| 49-9071 | Maintenance and Repair Workers, General | 226 | \$36,828 | \$17.70 |
| 49-9041 | Industrial Machinery Mechanics | 195 | \$46,139 | \$22.18 |
| <i>Source: NEworks, Data Download Center: Projections Data Files, 2015.</i> | | | | |

The H3 strategy being implemented by Nebraska is an extension of the findings from a report developed by Battelle in 2010 and updated in 2015. The report, which was jointly commissioned by the Nebraska Department of Labor and the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, sought to provide an assessment and an associated recommended strategy to promote economic development within Nebraska.

The 2010 study, entitled *A Competitive Advantage Assessment and Strategy for Nebraska*, led to the creation of Nebraska's Economic Industry Clusters. As defined by the Battelle study, Nebraska Economic Industry Clusters are "closely related industries that are logically connected" and contribute to a significant level of state economic activity and wealth. Economic Industry Clusters "may share a common market that they serve, while others are based more on shared 'know how' such as in the biosciences or information technology" related clusters (*Battelle, 2010*).

The 2010 Battelle Report identified 12 primary industry clusters within Nebraska that drive economic growth within the state. These include (1) Agricultural Machinery, (2) Agriculture and Food Processing, (3) Biosciences, (4) Business Management and Administrative Services, (5) Financial Services, (6) Health Services, (7) Hospitality and Tourism, (8) Precision Metals Manufacturing, (9) Renewable Energy, (10) Research, Development and Engineering Services, (11) Software and Computer Services, and (12) Transportation, Warehousing, and Transportation Logistics (*Battelle, 2010*).

The 2015 updated report, which is included in the appendix, reviewed the targeted industry clusters and the performance of the state from 2010 to 2014 using a variety of metrics to determine the state's preparedness for an innovation-driven economy that can remain competitive. These included such measures as academic performance in science and engineering, entrepreneurial activity, the availability of risk capital, research and development, including new patents and university technology transfer activity. These measures were then compared to several "benchmark" states that were identified in 2010 to show comparative progress over time relative to the identified metrics.

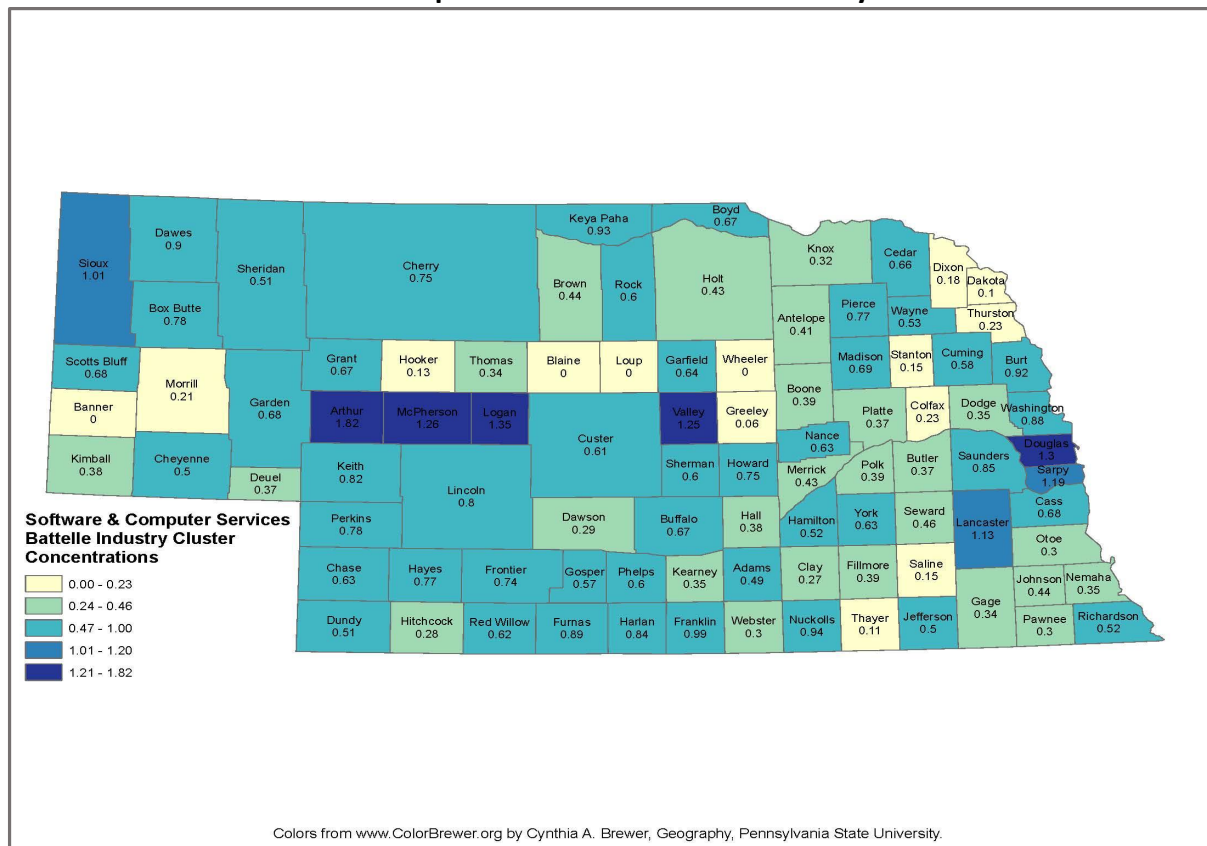
The 2015 updated report concluded that:

- 1) Nebraska's 12 primary industry clusters largely "held up well" during the 2010-2014 timeframe and should remain unchanged for the time being. The report mentions specifically that while certain clusters may have performed poorly over the time period, it would be "premature to suggest changes" to these clusters.

- 2) Performance in producing high-skilled talent (as measured by the attainment of science and engineering degrees) was “mixed.” While Nebraska has improved in nearly every measure of education attainment, it still lags behind the national averages in most areas. It did, however, outperform several benchmark states in education measures.
- 3) Entrepreneurial activity within the state, as measured by the growth of new business establishments, job creation from new business establishments, and *Inc.* magazine’s listing of the fastest growing US businesses, is lagging behind the nation as a whole and the benchmark states. Despite the lagging performance, the report did note that Nebraska has “improved somewhat compared to the benchmark states.
- 4) The availability of risk capital within the state remains relatively low when using such indicators as venture capital investments and Small Business Innovation Research grants awarded to entrepreneurs within the state. In fact, from 2009-2014, Nebraska ranked 41 out of 50 states in the dollar amount of venture capital invested and last among the nine benchmark states. Further, despite some improvement in the number of SBIR grants secured, Nebraska inventors continue to lag severely behind their peers nationally and in most of the benchmark states in successfully pursuing SBIR funding.
- 5) Research and development (R&D) expenditures within Nebraska, measured within the industry and academic sectors, performs well given the state’s economy and growth rate. Specifically, the 2015 report noted that Nebraska is “well above the national level and one of the highest among the benchmark states.”
- 6) Patent generation within the state continues to trail the amount of patent generation at the national level and within the benchmark states. The report did note that Nebraska has shown some improvement in this area since 2010 and the growth rate of new patents is “increasing faster than average.”

The initial Battelle Report and its 2015 update, provide several key pieces of data that are critical to developing those sectors that promote wealth creation within the state. The enclosed location quotient map provides a visual representation of economic activity statewide within one such sector, the growing Software and Computer Services Industry. The map accounts for such factors as average employment within the industry cluster, total employment within the county, average employment within the cluster statewide and total employment statewide. A value of 1.00 means that the concentration in the county equals that of the state and a value greater than 1.00 means a higher concentration of the industry than in the state.

Illustration 2: Software & Computer Services Battelle Industry Cluster Concentration Map



Source and Methodology: Nebraska Department of Labor using Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) data for the first quarter of 2015, which was first filtered for only private establishments, then summed by county and 6 digit NAICS code, and average employment for the quarter was computed. The data were then summed into 3 digit NAICS codes and run through the Battelle to NAICS crosswalk to assign Battelle cluster codes to each 3 digit NAICS code.

The appendix includes location quotient concentration maps for each of the twelve industry clusters identified in the Battelle Report. It should be noted that these maps do not necessarily reflect overall economic activity from a statewide perspective, but instead provide a snapshot of relative industry sector activity within a county. A complete copy of the updated 2015 Battelle Report can also be found in the Appendix.

H-1B Visa Labor Condition Applications

In addition to the occupational and industry needs identified herein, Nebraska submitted 1,697 Labor Condition Applications for H-1B Visas in 2014, of which 1,502 were certified. These certifications represent 3,032 high-skill jobs in the state with an average salary of \$74,362 (*Office of Foreign Labor Certification, 2014 Annual Report*). The enclosed table details the top occupations within Nebraska for which H-1B visa applications were submitted in 2014. The table also includes the number of applications certified as well as the average salary for those positions using national H-1B wage data (*Office of Foreign Labor Certification, 2014 Annual Report*).

Table 5: Top H-1B Occupations by Number of Applications in 2014

| SOC Code | Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) Title | Number of H-1B Applications Certified | Average Wage Offer |
|----------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 15-1121 | Computer Systems Analysts | 854 | \$66,489 |
| 15-1131 | Computer Programmers | 432 | \$61,835 |
| 15-1132 | Software Developers, Applications | 391 | \$79,816 |
| 15-1199 | Computer Occupations | 305 | \$70,248 |
| 13-2011 | Accountants and Auditors | 211 | \$51,392 |

Source: Office of Foreign Labor Certification, 2014 Annual Report.

While the occupations and industries detailed within the enclosed tables document growth and potential across the state as a whole, the unique economic and workforce dynamics of communities and economic regions designated by the Governor will also continue to inform strategies implemented at the regional and local levels. This includes sector strategies and career pathways as described later in this plan, as well as customized short-term training and rapid response protocols in order to support, maintain and promote the economic vitality of Nebraska's communities.

[\(iii.\) Employer Employment Needs](#)

As shown in the enclosed table, of Nebraska's top 10 H3 occupations with the most projected openings between 2012 and 2022, all but three of the occupations require education beyond high school. The remainder of these occupations require a high school diploma and some equivalent job experience or training. In keeping with the definition of an H3 occupation (i.e., at least half of their wage measures are at or above the regional average for all occupations), each of these jobs offer an attractive entry wage that ranges from \$12.05 for Maintenance and Repair Workers, General to \$27.29 for General and Operations Managers. Longer term, these occupations offer workers the potential for higher wages as shown in the enclosed table and as measured by the median wage within these occupations (*NEworks, Data Download Center: Projections Data Files, 2015; Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, Occupational Employment Statistics*).

Table 6: 2012-2022 H3 Occupation Projections by Average Annual Openings Positions

| SOC Code | Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) Title | Average Annual Openings | Average Entry Wage | Median Wage | Education |
|----------|--|-------------------------|--------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|
| 53-3032 | Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers | 920 | \$14.40 | \$20.65 | Postsecondary non-degree award |
| 29-1141 | Registered Nurses | 702 | \$21.50 | \$27.81 | Associate's degree |
| 13-2011 | Accountants and Auditors | 424 | \$20.17 | \$28.76 | Bachelor's degree |
| 47-2031 | Carpenters | 347 | \$12.11 | \$16.44 | HS diploma or equivalent |
| 11-1021 | General and Operations Managers | 341 | \$27.29 | \$45.07 | Bachelor's degree |
| 25-2021 | Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education | 311 | \$39,735* | \$50,562* | Bachelor's degree |
| 29-2061 | Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses | 293 | \$16.37 | \$18.70 | Postsecondary non-degree award |
| 25-2031 | Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education | 286 | \$40,307* | \$51,893* | Bachelor's degree |
| 49-9071 | Maintenance and Repair Workers, General | 226 | \$12.05 | \$17.35 | HS diploma or equivalent |
| 49-9041 | Industrial Machinery Mechanics | 195 | \$15.55 | \$21.37 | HS diploma or equivalent |

Source: NEworks, Data Download Center: Projections Data Files, 2015; Nebraska Department of Labor, Labor Market Information, Occupational Employment Statistics.

**Average entry and median annual salary information provided when wage data not available*

Occupations in the “Postsecondary Non-Degree Award” category includes those occupations that require less than two years of training for entry employment and encompasses a variety of occupations (see Table 7). Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers are projected to experience the highest number of annual openings through 2022 with an estimated 920 openings per year. (Truck driving usually requires one to five years of work experience in addition to short-term on-the-job training.) Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses; Electricians; and Welders, Cutters, Solderers and Brazers are the next fastest growing occupations, respectively, in the Postsecondary Non-Degree Award category. Of the “Postsecondary Non-Degree Award” occupations listed, First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers and Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers have the highest entry hourly wage (\$18.17 and \$17.42, respectively) (*NEworks, Data Download Center: Projections Data Files, 2015; Nebraska Occupational Employment Statistics Employment and Wage Estimates, 2015*).

Table 7: 2012-2022 Occupational Projections Top 10 Most Annual Openings for Postsecondary Non-Degree Award Education Level with Entry Wages

| SOC Code | Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) Title | Average Annual Openings | Hourly Entry Wage (3 rd quarter 2015) | Median Wage |
|----------|---|-------------------------|--|-------------|
| 53-3032 | Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers | 920 | \$14.40 | \$20.65 |
| 29-2061 | Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses | 293 | \$16.37 | \$18.70 |
| 47-2111 | Electricians | 155 | \$14.37 | \$20.56 |
| 51-4121 | Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers | 153 | \$13.15 | \$17.18 |
| 51-4041 | Machinists | 144 | \$12.93 | \$18.23 |
| 47-2152 | Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters | 132 | \$15.93 | \$24.04 |
| 51-1011 | First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers | 94 | \$18.17 | \$26.33 |
| 49-9021 | Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers | 85 | \$15.55 | \$22.20 |
| 49-9051 | Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers | 72 | \$17.42 | \$27.86 |
| 29-2071 | Medical Records and Health Information Technicians | 69 | \$13.24 | \$17.56 |

Source: NEworks, Data Download Center: Projections Data Files, 2015. Nebraska Occupational Employment Statistics Employment and Wage Estimates, 2015.

For those occupations that require an associate’s degree, six of the top 10 projected occupations in Nebraska are in medical fields. As detailed in Table 8 below, Registered Nurses top the list with 702 average annual openings. Other medical occupations with large numbers of openings include Dental Hygienists, Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technicians, Radiologic Technologists, Physical Therapist Assistants, and Respiratory Therapists. Other occupations, such as Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education and Web Developers, are also included (*NEworks, Data Download Center: Projections Data Files, 2015. Nebraska Occupational Employment Statistics Employment and Wage Estimates, 2015*).

Table 8: 2012-2022 H3 Occupational Projections Top 10 Most Annual Openings for Associate's Degree with Entry Wages from the Occupational Employment Statistics Survey

| SOC Code | Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) Title | Average Annual Openings | Hourly Entry Wage (3rd quarter 2015) | Median Wage |
|--|--|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| 29-1141 | Registered Nurses | 702 | \$21.50 | \$27.81 |
| 29-2021 | Dental Hygienists | 68 | \$25.35 | \$31.90 |
| 29-2012 | Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technicians | 59 | \$12.92 | \$18.33 |
| 29-2034 | Radiologic Technologists | 52 | \$19.27 | \$24.26 |
| 15-1134 | Web Developers | 46 | \$15.86 | \$26.20 |
| 23-2011 | Paralegals and Legal Assistants | 46 | \$15.31 | \$19.86 |
| 31-2021 | Physical Therapist Assistants | 39 | \$18.08 | \$24.44 |
| 15-1152 | Computer Network Support Specialists | 32 | \$19.77 | \$28.53 |
| 29-1126 | Respiratory Therapists | 27 | \$21.07 | \$24.52 |
| 29-2032 | Diagnostic Medical Sonographers | 17 | \$25.82 | \$30.25 |
| <i>Source: NEworks, Data Download Center: Projections Data Files, 2015. Nebraska Occupational Employment Statistics Employment and Wage Estimates, 2015.</i> | | | | |

As documented in Table 9 below, of the top 10 most openings for bachelor's degrees, four entail computer-related occupations, three are education-related with the remaining three occupations comprised of Accountants and Auditors, General and Operations Managers, and Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists. The highest hourly entry wage for occupations was for General and Operations Managers (\$27.29) and Software Developers, Applications (\$25.55). Hourly entry wage was not available for education-related occupations but an annual entry and median salary are provided (*NEworks, Data Download Center: Projections Data Files, 2015. Nebraska Occupational Employment Statistics Employment and Wage Estimates, 2015*).

Table 9: 2012-2022 H3 Occupational Projections Top 10 Most Annual Openings for Bachelor's Degree with Entry Wages

| SOC Code | Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) Title | Average Annual Openings | Hourly Entry Wage (3rd quarter 2015) | Median Wage |
|----------|--|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| 13-2011 | Accountants and Auditors | 424 | \$20.17 | \$28.76 |
| 11-1021 | General and Operations Managers | 341 | \$27.29 | \$45.07 |
| 25-2021 | Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education | 311 | \$39,735* | \$50,562* |
| 25-2031 | Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education | 286 | \$40,307* | \$51,893* |
| 15-1132 | Software Developers, Applications | 164 | \$25.55 | \$37.87 |
| 13-1161 | Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists | 154 | \$17.94 | \$27.94 |
| 15-1121 | Computer Systems Analysts | 139 | \$24.61 | \$35.10 |
| 15-1142 | Network and Computer Systems Administrators | 134 | \$23.04 | \$31.60 |
| 15-1131 | Computer Programmers | 121 | \$22.63 | \$36.31 |
| 25-2022 | Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education | 113 | \$41,462* | \$50,664* |

Source: NEworks, Data Download Center: Projections Data Files, 2015. Nebraska Occupational Employment Statistics Employment and Wage Estimates, 2015.

*Annual entry wages is provided when hourly wage data are not available

In addition to these projected occupational needs, industry groups in the state have expressed concern over a shortage of skilled workers in certain trade occupations, such as welding. The Nebraska Department of Labor, Economic Development, Education and postsecondary education institutions continue to work to alleviate these shortages and high-wage, high-skills and high-demand occupations are a strong focus in the enclosed Combined State Plan for Nebraska's Workforce System. Strategies such as career pathways, sector strategies and other targeted approaches will be initiated as appropriate to meet the needs identified through labor and economic data and those expressed through employers in the state.

(B) Workforce Analysis

Population and Age According to 2013 American Community Survey three-year estimates, of those 62-69 years of age, a higher percentage of Nebraskans (54.1%) participated in the labor

force when compared to the nation as a whole (43.6%). Older workers continue to be served through the core, intensive and training services offered at the American Job Centers, and fill employers' needs for experienced, knowledge-based workers. The state's *Senior Community Service Employment Program* and the USDOL Title V Program known in Nebraska as *Experience Works*, are resources for older workers who are also ensured nondiscrimination and equal opportunity by the *Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination* policy (*U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Single Year of Age and Sex for the United States, States, and Puerto Rico Commonwealth: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2014*).

The workforce system within Nebraska must account for the growing numbers of workers who are approaching retirement age. The enclosed table provides the number and percentage of workers in each industry who are ages 55 and older, as well as younger workers who represent a significant segment of Nebraska's present and future workforce. Of particular note is the high percentages of older workers within the Construction; Manufacturing, Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services; and Transportation and Warehousing industries where nearly one in every three workers are 55 years of age or older. These industries have long been essential drivers of economic growth and stability within Nebraska, and developing a talent pipeline to assume projected openings will not only help to support these industries but also to provide employment opportunities in industries offering an abundance of occupations that are high-wage, high-skill and high-demand.

Table 10: Industry Employment by Age Group Second Quarter 2015

| Industry Title | Total | Age 24 and Younger | Percent 25 and Younger | Age 55 and Older | Percent 55 and Older |
|--|---------|--------------------|------------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| All Industry | 72,860 | 33,369 | 45.7% | 5,774 | 7.9% |
| Accommodation and Food Services | 52,908 | 9,951 | 18.8% | 8,275 | 15.6% |
| Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services | 11,562 | 2,082 | 18.0% | 3,055 | 26.4% |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting | 17,295 | 6,558 | 37.9% | 2,990 | 17.3% |
| Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation | 46,195 | 6,684 | 14.5% | 8,555 | 18.5% |
| Construction | 89,113 | 5,780 | 6.5% | 28,813 | 32.3% |
| Educational Services | 54,429 | 4,516 | 8.3% | 12,460 | 22.9% |
| Finance and Insurance | 131,263 | 18,067 | 13.8% | 30,795 | 23.5% |
| Health Care and Social Assistance | 19,259 | 2,387 | 12.4% | 4,139 | 21.5% |
| Information | 11,136 | 663 | 6.0% | 2,200 | 19.8% |
| Management of Companies and Enterprises | 95,951 | 8,312 | 8.7% | 22,586 | 23.5% |
| Manufacturing | 4,879 | 103 | 2.1% | 337 | 29.4% |
| Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction | 27,672 | 5,424 | 19.6% | 5,704 | 22.1% |
| Other Services (except Public Administration) | 45,057 | 5,070 | 11.3% | 9,155 | 21.0% |
| Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services | 49,105 | 6,938 | 14.1% | 15,376 | 31.0% |
| Public Administration | 12,909 | 1,359 | 10.5% | 2,750 | 27.3% |
| Real Estate and Rental and Leasing | 115,307 | 35,624 | 30.9% | 24,053 | 20.1% |
| Retail Trade | 26,432 | 2,062 | 7.8% | 7,232 | 29.4% |
| Transportation and Warehousing | 12,318 | 467 | 3.8% | 2,604 | 29.5% |
| Utilities | 44,270 | 4,373 | 9.9% | 11,761 | 27.0% |
| Wholesale Trade | 72,860 | 33,369 | 45.8% | 5,774 | 7.9% |

Source: NEworks, Data Download Center, 2015.

Disability Estimates from the 2011-2013 American Community Survey show that 5.2% of Nebraskans in the labor force have a disability. Of those who are unemployed in Nebraska, 11.5% have a disability while 88.5% have no disability. Nearly 5% of employed Nebraskans reported

having a disability, with the greatest percentage of those having a hearing difficulty (36.8%) (*U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2013 3-Year American Community Survey*).

Further statistics show that the significant population of persons with disabilities in Nebraska are in need of workforce services in order to bridge the gap between themselves and their peers across the state.

- There are a total of 205,354 persons within Nebraska with a disability (*Annual Disability Statistics Compendium, 2014*), of which 88,700 are between the ages of 21 and 64 (*2012 Disability Status Report, disabilitystatistics.org*).
- Of those Nebraskans ages 18-64 with a disability, only 45.5% are employed, a rate that is significantly less than the 82.6% employment rate for Nebraskans, ages 18-64, without a disability (*Annual Disability Statistics Compendium, 2014*).
- A total of 16,900 persons with disabilities in Nebraska receive benefits (*2012 Disability Status Report, disabilitystatistics.org*), and
- In 2012 alone, Nebraska's total expenditure on SSDI benefits was \$594,300,000 (*Annual Disability Statistics Compendium, 2014*).

Nebraska has many options for assisting disabled customers in finding work. NEworks, which offers job search and career exploration resources, has text sizing options and is designed to work with JAWS for visually impaired customers, and assistive technologies have been upgraded in the American Job Centers to assist disabled customers. American Job Center staff are aware of the resources in the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) and can provide employers information on options for accommodations in the Searchable Online Accommodation Resource (SOAR). The disabled may also include disabled veterans. The Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG) outreach program staff are actively involved in employer contacts and individual counseling for veterans with significant barriers to employment (SBE). Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation is a primary partner in the service delivery system offered at the local American Job Centers. Referrals as well as co-enrollment of participants in WIOA and Vocational Rehab programs is common practice in Nebraska.

Homeless According to the *2015 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress*, there were approximately 2,744 homeless people in Nebraska in 2015. The unsheltered homeless rate in Nebraska was 4.5% in 2014, which was the 5th lowest such rate in the country behind only Delaware (3.9%), Rhode Island (3.2%), Massachusetts (2.8%), and Maine (2.5%) (*2015 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress*). American Job Center staff are available to help homeless customers to find employment and are knowledgeable about additional community services such as shelters, food banks, and transitional services.

Race, Ethnicity, Immigration, and Language According to 2014 population estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, there were nearly 38,000 people living in Nebraska who identify as two or

more races. Of those who identified with one race, the greatest number were White (1,682,074), followed by Black (92,289), Asian (41,216), American Indian and Alaska Native (41,216), and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander (2,235). In terms of ethnicity, there were 191,325 people identifying with the Hispanic or Latino ethnicity living in Nebraska in 2014, which accounts for 10.2% of Nebraska's total population. Nearly 24% of those who reported identifying with the Hispanic or Latino ethnicity were foreign born and became naturalized U.S. citizens (*U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates*).

Of those who were foreign born and living in Nebraska, the race with the greatest percentage of naturalized citizenship was Black (47.1%), followed by Asian (44.5%), White (31.2%), Two or More Races (30.9%), American Indian and Alaska Native (3.1%) (*U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Age, Race Alone or in Combination, and Hispanic Origin for the United States and States: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2014*). Since 2010, the fastest growing minority group within the state has been the Asian population, which has increased from more than 33,322 in 2010 to nearly 41,216 in 2014, an increase of 23.5% (*Census Bureau, 2010 and 2014 Population Estimates*).

Given the influx of Hispanic, Asian and other foreign-born populations, there is a small but steady population with limited English proficiency, which can hinder the ability to seek, apply for and succeed in employment. Data from the American Community Survey, show that 2.6% of the state's population, ages 14 or older, does not speak English or speak English "very well" (*U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*).

(i) Employment and Unemployment

Since January 2010, the total Nebraska civilian labor force (not seasonally-adjusted) peaked in July 2013 at 1,039,199 of which 993,176 were employed, for a 4.1% unemployment rate. The lowest level the total civilian labor force reached was in the first month of the sample, January 2010. The total civilian labor force had been over one million since September 2011, but in September 2015 dropped to 997,841 of which 971,682 were employed, equating to an unemployment rate of 2.6%. Preliminary data from October 2015 showed the civilian labor force increased to 1,010,068, of which 983,401 were employed, and the unemployment rate remained unchanged at 2.6%. Since January 2010, when the unemployment rate hit a recent high of 5.4%, the unemployment rate has dropped at a fairly steady rate and reached a low in April 2015 of 2.5% (*NEworks, Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment for Nebraska in Multiple Time Periods, 2015*).

Using data from 2013, claims show that 57.8% of individuals initially applying for unemployment insurance were male and 42.2% female. When aggregated by race, the greatest percentage of claimants were white (71.2%), followed by unknown/not provided (15%), and the third more predominant was the black population (10.8%), followed by American Indian or Alaska Native (1.8%), Asian (0.9%), and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (0.2%) (*NEworks, Unemployment Insurance Claims Data, 2013*).

Nebraskans in the 25-34 age group (29.4%) had the greatest percentage of claimants by age followed by the 45-54 group (22%), 35-44 group (21%), 55-64 group (15.1%), 24 and younger group (8.5%), and lastly the 65 and over group (4.1%). The top 5 occupations in initial claims were

Production (13,713), Construction and Extraction (11,941), Office and Administrative Support (11,180), Transportation and Material Moving (10,414), and Sales and Related (5,881). (*NEworks, Unemployment Insurance Claims Data, 2013*).

The education level of individuals filing claims revealed that 47.8% of claimants had a high school diploma. The second highest education category was some college education (22.5%) followed by less than a high school degree (16.2%). The education categories with the lowest percentage of initial claims were for bachelor's degree (7.4%), master's degree or higher (4.9%), and unknown/not provided (1.2%). Of Nebraska's unemployment insurance claimant population, a large percentage (64%) hold a high school diploma or less. These individuals could potentially benefit from Adult Basic Education or occupational skills training in order to obtain the skills needed by Nebraska employers (*NEworks, Data Download Center, Unemployment Insurance Claims Data: 2013 Unemployment Insurance Initial Claimant Characteristics, 2015*).

Underemployment: Nebraska has long enjoyed relatively low unemployment rates, and recorded the nation's second lowest such rate using November 2015 seasonally adjusted monthly rankings (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). Despite the low number of unemployed Nebraskans, there is a significant number of workers within the state who work two or more jobs in order to make ends meet. Over the past three years, Nebraska has experienced a significant steady decrease of the number of jobseekers who are unemployed when they begin their job search. According to Nebraska's public labor exchange, the 4th Quarter ETA 9002A for PY12, PY13, and PY14, the percentage of those who are employed at the time of participation, (when they first seek services from Wagner-Peyser), has more than doubled. This indicates that roughly one third of those individuals seeking employment are probably underemployed or working multiple low-paying jobs.

Table 11: Number and Percentage of Employed Workers Who Initiate Employment Search

| Program Year | Total Participants | Employed | Not Employed | Percentage |
|--------------|--------------------|----------|--------------|------------|
| PY12 | 114,257 | 14,489 | 99,768 | 14.5% |
| PY13 | 95,776 | 22,462 | 73,314 | 30.6% |
| PY14 | 73,565 | 18,189 | 55,376 | 32.8% |

Source: NEworks using Wagner-Peyser Participation data, 2016.

Data from a June 2015 Metro Area Labor Availability Report developed jointly by the Nebraska Department of Labor and the Nebraska Department of Economic Development confirm the relatively high percentage of Nebraskans who are underemployed. The survey, which included the Omaha and Lincoln metropolitan areas, found that 14.1% of the survey's respondents held multiple jobs, or nearly one in every seven workers. Most telling in the data collected was the alarmingly high number of potential jobseekers (i.e., those who responded "yes" to one of the following questions "Are you actively seeking a new job?" "Are you likely to change jobs in the next year if a suitable job is available?" or "Are you likely to reenter the workforce in the next year if a suitable job is available?" In fact, the survey data found that there are 312,737 potential jobseekers within the Omaha and Lincoln areas, a figure that represents nearly one in every three Nebraska workers (*Metro Area Labor Availability Report, 2015*).

An abundance of employment opportunities that offer a competitive or living wage is a necessary component of a robust workforce system. A 2010 report released by Nebraska Appleaseed found that a single parent with a preschooler residing in Omaha would need to make at least \$16.39 per hour to simply make ends meet (*Self Sufficiency Standard for Nebraska 2010*). Using the Living Wage Calculator established by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the living wage for an Omaha family comprised of 2 adults and 3 children is \$24.98. This is significantly higher than Nebraska's 2015 minimum wage of \$8.00 per hour and higher than the median wage earned by all Nebraska workers (\$15.95), suggesting a large percentage of families in Nebraska that do not make ends meet or that rely on multiple jobs to provide for basic necessities.

One issue facing underemployed and other disadvantaged workers seeking a higher wage is the "cliff effect," a term that describes the various levels at which a low-income person begins to lose benefits with increased income. The "cliff effect" was the focus of a 2010 report developed by Voices for Children in Nebraska. Using a family of three as the example, the report found that the family would need to make at least \$20.62 per hour in order to meet basic needs which included food, child care, medical expenses, housing transportation and other expenses. Highlighted in the report were the various hourly wage levels at which the earner begins to lose work supports, based on full-time work. At \$5.11 per hour, the worker will lose eligibility for adult Medicaid; at \$11.44 per hour the worker loses eligibility for food stamps; at \$16.29 per hour, access to child care subsidies are lost, and at \$17.82 per hour, the worker is no longer eligible for health insurance for their children. The absorption of these costs oftentimes place a family in a worse position financially than they were prior to the increase in pay, creating a system that punishes rather than rewards hard work. Given the high percentage of underemployed workers within the state, the cliff effect is a strong concern for many of Nebraska's workforce partners as they work to move their underemployed customers into employment opportunities that lead to economic self-sufficiency.

(ii) Labor Market Trends

Nebraska is expected to expand its workforce by 9.93% from 2012 to 2022, with a projected increase of 100,340 wage and salary jobs. In the state as a whole, both Information (comprised of such industries as publishing, broadcasting, telecommunications, and data processing) and Natural Resources and Mining supersectors are expected to decline. Education and Health Services is expected to add 34,402 jobs from 2012 to 2022, the most of any supersector. Construction is expected to be the fastest growing with a 2.27% compound annual growth rate (CAGR). Of the industries projected to expand, Government is expected to experience the slowest growth, at 0.23% CAGR. The Services-Providing sector, which entails trade, transportation, retail, et al.), is projected to have a greater percent change in employment (10.77%) compared to the Goods-Producing sector (6.23%). Additionally, the Services-Providing sector is expected to experience faster growth (1.03% CAGR) compared to the Goods-Producing sector (0.61% CAGR). Services-Providing jobs are expected to make up 82% of total wage and salary jobs.

COMBINED STATE PLAN FOR NEBRASKA'S WORKFORCE SYSTEM

As detailed in the enclosed Table 12, overall wages in Nebraska across all industries have increased since 2001. However, annual wage increases have generally been more modest since 2008 with the current median hourly wage only .96% greater than the median hourly wage in 2014. Nebraska occupational wages as reported by the Occupational Employment Statistics survey tend to be lower than the national rate for the same occupation. The average entry wage across all occupations is \$9.70 per hour in the third quarter of 2015 while the average wage for an experienced worker is \$25.35 per hour (*Nebraska Occupational Employment Statistics Employment and Wage Estimates*).

Table 12: Compensation Across All Industries, Nebraska

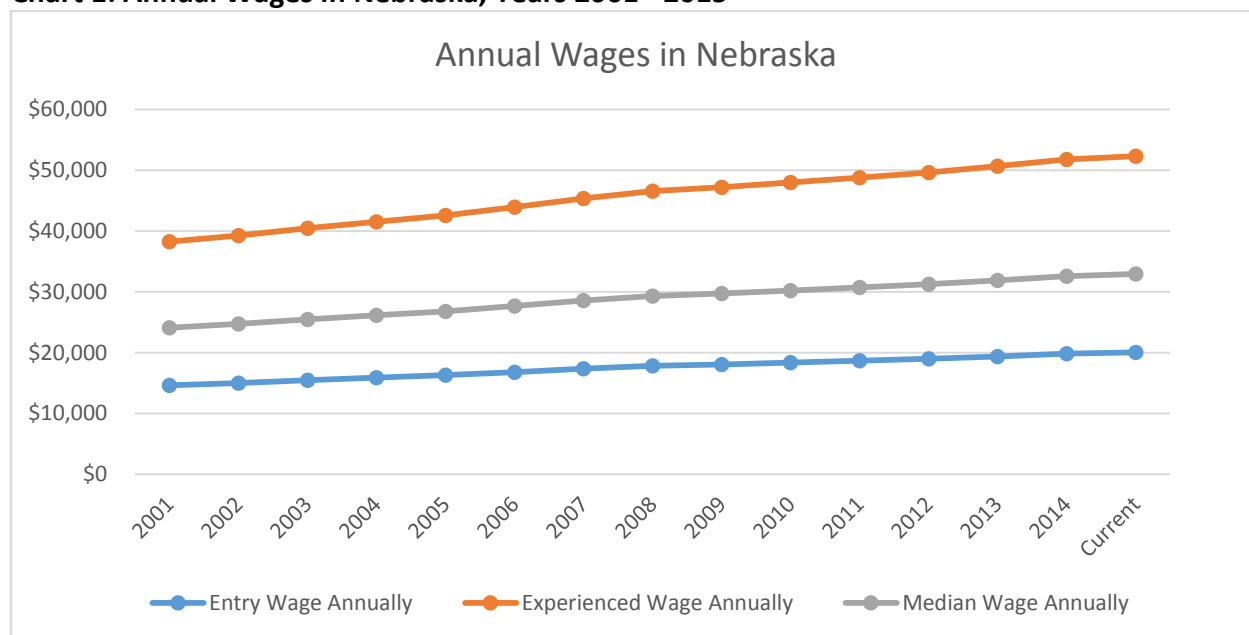
| Year | Entry Wage Annually | Entry Wage Hourly | Experienced Wage Annually | Experienced Wage Hourly | Median Wage Annually | Median Wage Hourly | % Change Median Wage Hourly |
|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| Third Quarter 2015 | \$20,175 | \$9.70 | \$52,680 | \$25.35 | \$33,180 | \$15.95 | 1.59% |
| 2014 | \$19,835 | \$9.55 | \$51,790 | \$24.90 | \$32,615 | \$15.70 | 2.28% |
| 2013 | \$19,410 | \$9.35 | \$50,680 | \$24.35 | \$31,920 | \$15.35 | 1.99% |
| 2012 | \$19,020 | \$9.15 | \$49,660 | \$23.85 | \$31,275 | \$15.05 | 1.69% |
| 2011 | \$18,690 | \$9.00 | \$48,805 | \$23.45 | \$30,740 | \$14.80 | 1.72% |
| 2010 | \$18,400 | \$8.85 | \$48,040 | \$23.10 | \$30,255 | \$14.55 | 1.75% |
| 2009 | \$18,090 | \$8.70 | \$47,230 | \$22.70 | \$29,745 | \$14.30 | 1.42% |
| 2008 | \$17,845 | \$8.60 | \$46,590 | \$22.40 | \$29,345 | \$14.10 | 2.55% |
| 2007 | \$17,385 | \$8.35 | \$45,400 | \$21.85 | \$28,595 | \$13.75 | 3.38% |
| 2006 | \$16,830 | \$8.10 | \$43,950 | \$21.15 | \$27,680 | \$13.30 | 3.10% |
| 2005 | \$16,310 | \$7.85 | \$42,590 | \$20.45 | \$26,825 | \$12.90 | 2.38% |
| 2004 | \$15,920 | \$7.65 | \$41,565 | \$20.00 | \$26,180 | \$12.60 | 2.86% |
| 2003 | \$15,510 | \$7.45 | \$40,500 | \$19.45 | \$25,510 | \$12.25 | 2.94% |
| 2002 | \$15,040 | \$7.25 | \$39,265 | \$18.90 | \$24,730 | \$11.90 | 2.59% |
| 2001 | \$14,665 | \$7.05 | \$38,285 | \$18.40 | \$24,115 | \$11.60 | - |

Source: Nebraska Occupational Employment Statistics Employment and Wage Estimates.

As detailed in the preceding table and depicted in the following charts, wages in Nebraska have increased steadily since 2001 when looking at both annual wages (see Chart 1) and hourly wages (see Chart 2). During this time period, annual entry wages have increased from \$14,665 in 2001 to \$20,045 currently, an increase of 36.68%. Annual wages for experienced workers have increased \$38,285 to \$52,340, an increase of 36.71% (*Nebraska Occupational Employment Statistics Employment and Wage Estimates, 2015*). In light of these data, it should be mentioned that the living wage for Nebraska, calculated using MIT's Living Wage calculator, is \$24.13 for a family consisting of two adults (one who is working) and three

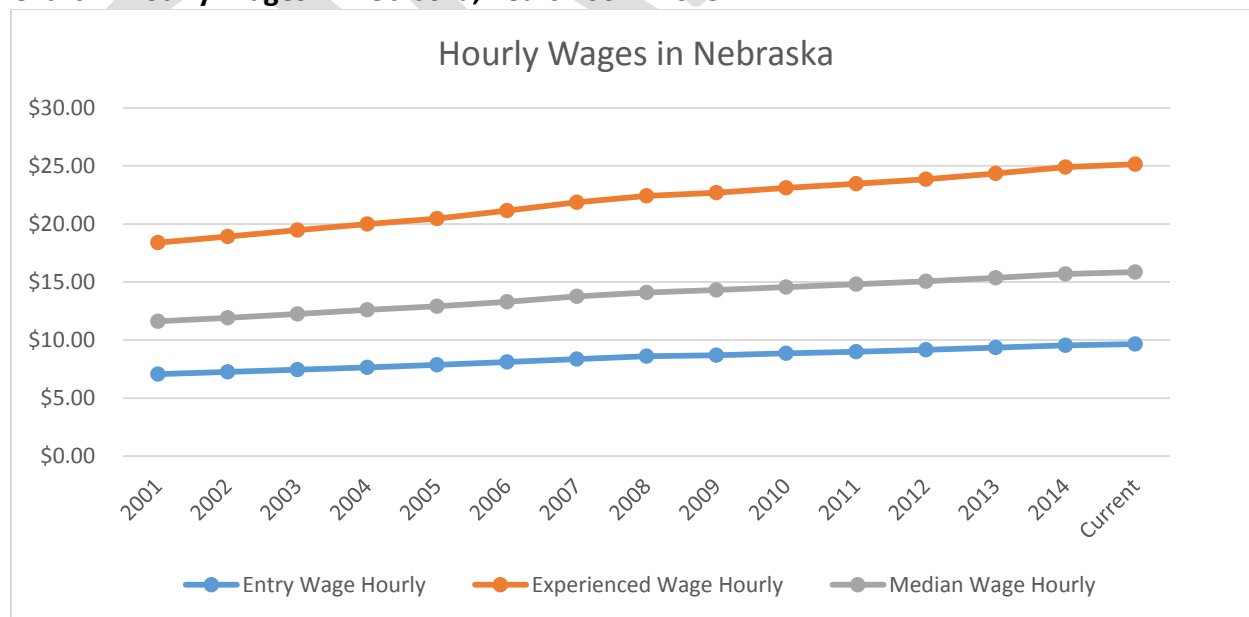
children (*Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2015*). This benchmark of economic sustainability aligns with the average wage of \$25.15 being earned by those Nebraska workers with experience. However, the \$24.13 living wage established by MIT is higher than the median wage for all Nebraska workers of \$15.85 and significantly higher than the \$9.65 average wage for entry level workers within the state. These data further indicate a large percentage of Nebraska families who struggle to earn a living wage or who only earn a living wage through multiple low-paying jobs.

Chart 1: Annual Wages in Nebraska, Years 2001 - 2015



Source: Nebraska Occupational Employment Statistics Employment and Wage Estimates, 2015.

Chart 2: Hourly Wages in Nebraska, Years 2001 - 2015



Source: Nebraska Occupational Employment Statistics Employment and Wage Estimates, 2015.

(iii) Education and Skill Levels of the Workforce

By 2022, nearly 35% of the state's projected annual openings will require education beyond high school. For the period between 2012 and 2022, Nebraska's occupational employment is projected to increase by 9.54%. All of the educational attainment categories beyond high school are projected to experience a percent change that exceeds the statewide average, with a range from 12.18% for some college, no degree to 15.13% for master's degree. The highest number of annual openings for education levels beyond a high school diploma or equivalent will occur in occupations requiring a bachelor's degree with 5,652 openings followed by postsecondary non-degree award with 3,556 openings (*NEworks, Data Download Center: Projections Data Files, 2015*).

Table 13: Projected Employment by Education, 2012 – 2022

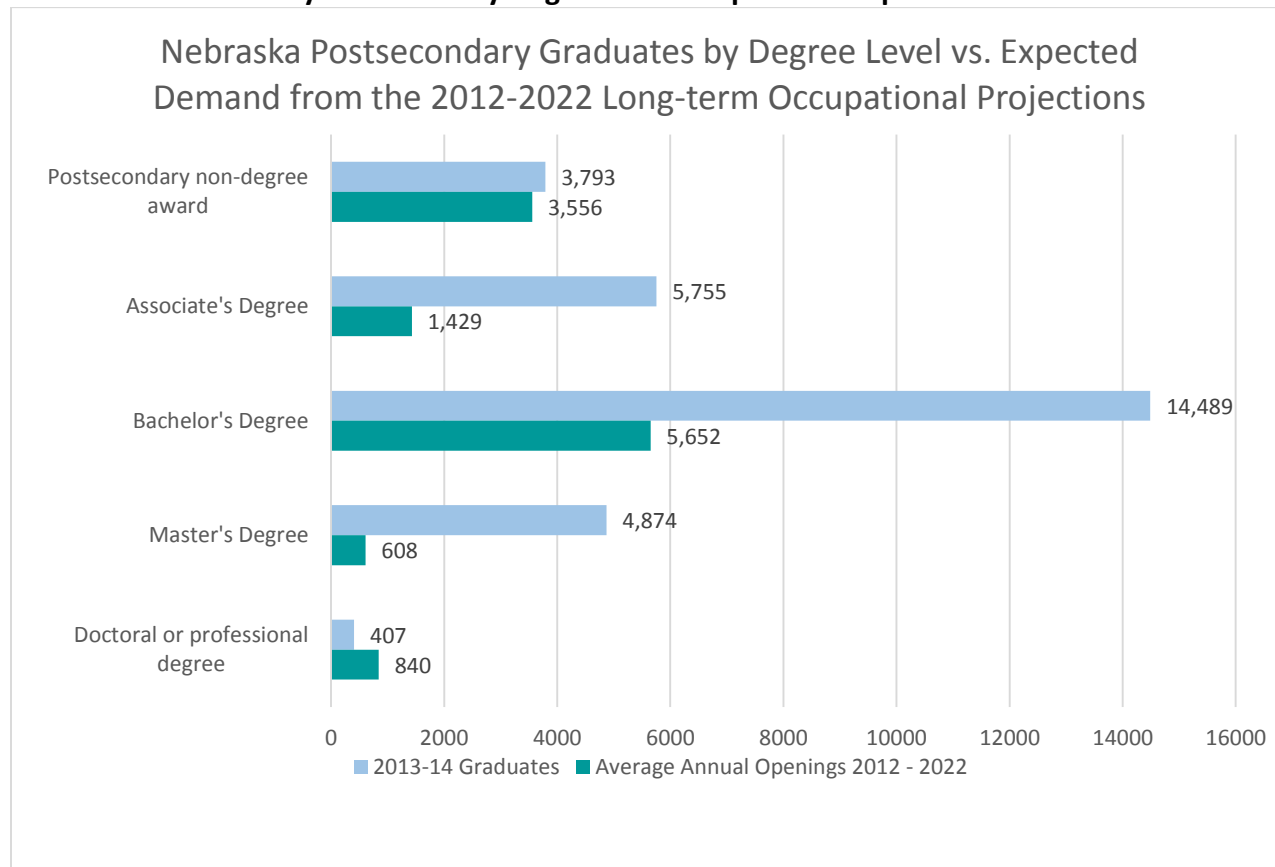
| Education | 2012 Estimated Employment | 2022 Projected Employment | Growth Openings | Replacement Openings | Total Openings | Avg Annual Openings | Numeric Change | Percent Change |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Doctoral or professional degree | 26,019 | 29,230 | 3,211 | 5,184 | 8,395 | 840 | 3,211 | 12.34 % |
| Master's degree | 17,295 | 19,912 | 2,617 | 3,495 | 6,112 | 608 | 2,617 | 15.13 % |
| Bachelor's degree | 168,105 | 188,940 | 21,179 | 35,326 | 56,505 | 5,652 | 20,835 | 12.39 % |
| Associate's degree | 42,962 | 48,729 | 5,793 | 8,537 | 14,330 | 1,429 | 5,767 | 13.42 % |
| Postsecondary non-degree award | 106,029 | 121,063 | 15,083 | 20,497 | 35,580 | 3,556 | 15,034 | 14.18 % |
| Some college, no degree | 16,080 | 18,039 | 1,972 | 3,375 | 5,347 | 533 | 1,959 | 12.18 % |
| High school diploma or equivalent | 404,581 | 437,732 | 37,404 | 86,477 | 123,881 | 12,361 | 33,151 | 8.19% |
| Less than high school | 290,335 | 310,013 | 23,895 | 88,642 | 112,537 | 11,254 | 19,678 | 6.78% |

Source: NEworks, Data Download Center: Projections Data Files, 2015

When the 2012-2022 occupational projections average annual openings were compared to the number of 2012-2013 graduates reported in the Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data System, the number of graduates completing degrees outpaced expected demand (see Chart 3). Yet, employers may have difficulty recruiting for specific occupations due to a mismatch of degree attainment and employer vacancies. A person with a bachelor's degree in philosophy may not have the educational background required to fill a mechanical engineering position.

Additionally, the labor market demand for graduates above the associate degree level is higher nationally and graduates may leave the state for employment opportunities requiring higher degrees (*Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data System, Nebraska institutions.*)

Chart 3: Postsecondary Graduates by Degree vs. Anticipated Occupational Demands



Source: *Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System 2013-14 Completers file and Nebraska Department of Labor, Office of Labor Market Information 2012-2022 Long Term Occupational Projections.*

Of special concern is the significant segment of Nebraska's population who lacks a basic education. According to 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, there are 1,392,964 adults (age eighteen and older) in the state of Nebraska. Of this number, 9.8% or 136,510 persons have less than a high school diploma. Education remains a strong indicator of economic prosperity. Within Nebraska, nearly one in every four persons without a high school diploma (24.7%) live in poverty and the average median wage for a person with less than a high school diploma is \$21,898 (*U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*) – a figure that lags significantly behind the median wage across all industries within Nebraska \$33,180 using Nebraska Occupational Employment Statistics Employment and Wage Estimates (2015). Nebraska's workforce system will maintain a strong focus on education and training so that workers within the state have the skills and knowledge necessary to earn a living wage.

As detailed in Table 14 (below), there is a particularly urgent need for Adult Basic Education and GED preparation among the state's growing number of Hispanics, as 46.8% lack a high school diploma. The greatest percentage of those without a high school education, among race groups, were Asian (24.9%), American Indian (24.2%), and Black (15.1%). Interestingly, the greatest percentage of those attaining a Bachelor's or Graduate or Professional degree was Asian (41.6%) when comparing race groups (*2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates*). Since individuals without a high school diploma or equivalent are at a distinct disadvantage in Nebraska's labor market, the need for services that focus on staying in school and high school diploma attainment is prevalent in all these subpopulations. Recruitment and enrollment of minority individuals in plan partners' programs is a constant priority and effort across the state.

Table 14: Educational attainment in Nebraska by Age, Race, Ethnicity, and Education Level

| Age Over 25 Years | Race | | | | | |
|---|--------------------|--------------|---------------------------------|---|-------------|-------------------|
| | Ethnicity | White Alone* | Black or African American Alone | American Indian and Alaska Native Alone | Asian Alone | Two or More Races |
| Educational Attainment | Hispanic or Latino | | | | | |
| Less than 9 th grade | 29.5% | 3.6% | 4.8% | 12.8% | 17.9% | 4.8% |
| 9 th to 12 th grade, no diploma | 17.2% | 4.8% | 10.4% | 11.4% | 7.0% | 9.2% |
| Regular high school diploma | 18.6% | 24.2% | 20.5% | 21.5% | 12.4% | 16.5% |
| GED or alternative credential | 7.0% | 3.4% | 6.7% | 7.2% | 1.6% | 6.0% |
| Some college, no degree | 13.8% | 23.4% | 25.4% | 23.7% | 14.1% | 24.3% |
| Associate's degree | 3.5% | 10.6% | 8.0% | 10.7% | 5.4% | 12.6% |
| Bachelor's degree | 7.7% | 20.8% | 16.2% | 6.6% | 20.1% | 16.7% |
| Graduate or professional | 2.6% | 9.2% | 8.0% | 6.1% | 21.5% | 9.9% |

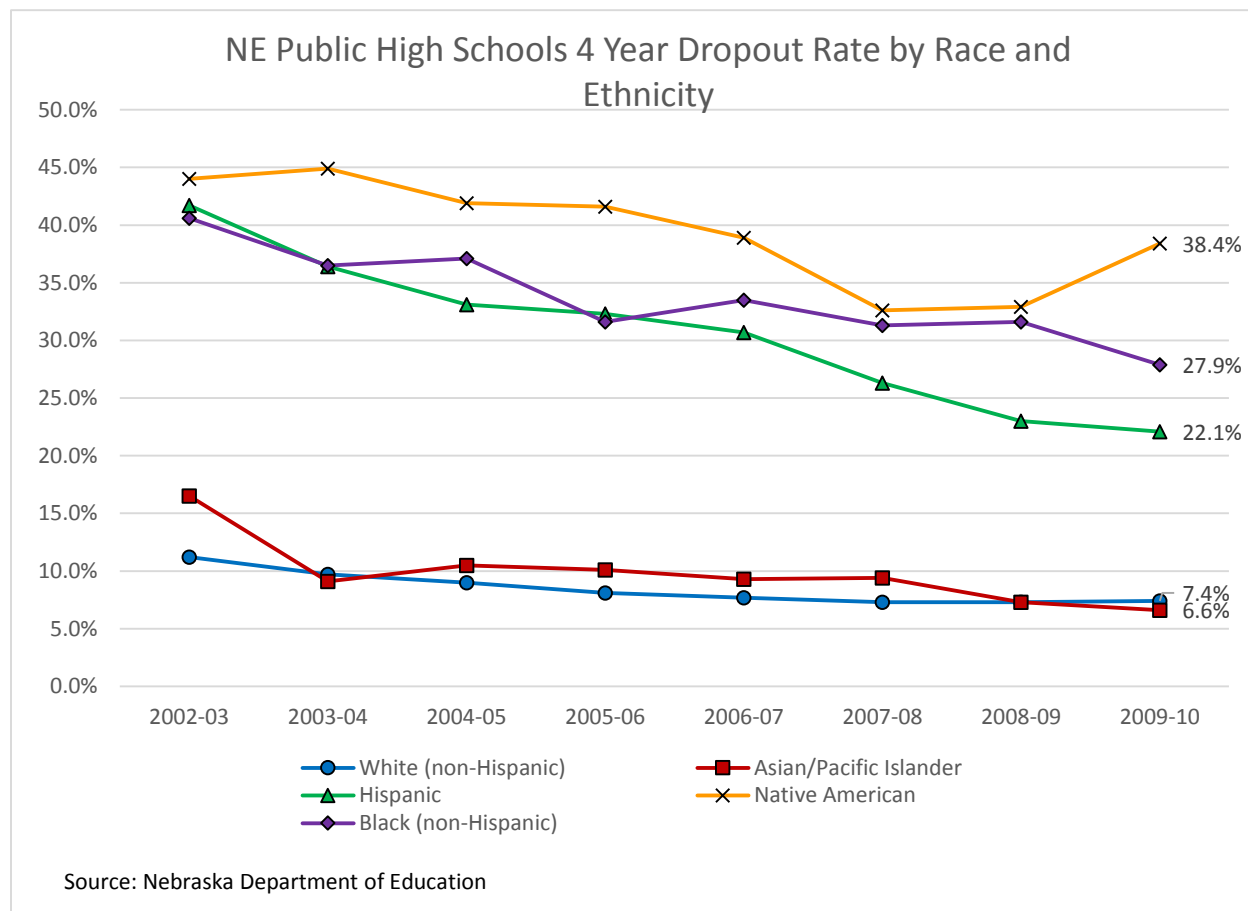
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, Sex by Educational Attainment for the Population 25 and Over.

Note: The term "Alone" in the enclosed chart refers to those residents who identify themselves as belonging exclusively to a specific racial group.

The chart which follows includes the dropout rate within Nebraska public high schools measured by the percent of students in a freshman cohort who drop out of high school within four years. As shown, Native American students drop out at a rate of 38.4%, which is the highest dropout rate amongst all groups. Black students drop out at a rate of 27.9% and Hispanic students at a rate of 22.1%. These rates are alarmingly high, especially when compared to the 7.4% and 6.6% rates experienced by white and Asian/pacific islanders. Data show that not only is there a growing demand through 2022 for workers with education beyond high school, but also the

strong correlation between educational attainment and earnings. Efforts that target and support groups that experience high dropout rates are necessary to prepare these populations for gainful employment and to ensure strong workforce needed by employers.

Chart 4: Four Year Dropout Rate by Race and Ethnicity



According to U.S. Census estimates, in 2014 there were 85,805 or 4.9% of Nebraskans age 5 and over who speak English less than “very well.” A majority (89.4%) of Nebraskans age 5 and over speak only English at home, but 10.6% (185,620) of Nebraskans speak a language other than English at home. Of those who do not speak English at home, 68.8% (127,832) Nebraskans age 5 and over speak Spanish or Spanish Creole at home. The U.S. Census estimates show that 46.4% of Nebraskans (86,127), age 5 and over, who do not speak English at home speak English less than “very well.” This deficiency in English speaking points to a need for English as a Second Language education. This will enable limited English speakers more opportunities in the workplace (*U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates*).

The U.S. Census estimate of those age 5 and over who do not speak English at home and speak English less than “very well” increased from 81,310 Nebraskans in 2013 to 86,127 in 2014 (*U.S. Census Bureau, 2014 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates*). According to 2013 U.S. Census estimates there were seven languages/language groups that have more than 1,000 speakers in the state who speak English less than “very well.” The estimated number of people

in 2013 that speak another language and speak English less than “very well”: Spanish or Spanish Creole, 57,286; Vietnamese, 4,627; African languages, 2,657; Chinese, 2,611; Other Asian languages, 2,365; Arabic, 1,767; and French (including Patois, Cajun), 1,438. These seven languages/language groups account for 89.5% of all the state’s population who speak English less than “very well” (*U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates*).

English as a second language (ESL) instruction is offered in Adult Education programs throughout the state. Instruction ranges from serving persons with no literacy skills in their native language to those who possess advanced degrees in their native language; from survival skills to preparation for the GED test. The average enrollment of ESL learners makes up approximately 40-44% of the total adult’s served in the Adult Education program in Nebraska.

In addition, individuals with limited-English proficiency receive the language assistance necessary to afford them meaningful access to workforce programs, services and information. Many Career Centers have bilingual staff members and access to language lines to assist limited English speaking customers. Nebraska contracts with LanguageLine Interpretation Service to eliminate language barriers that may prevent non-English speaking populations from applying for assistance and accessing services, as well as conducting career exploration. In addition, many employers have utilized Nebraska’s Worker Training Grants to offer English/Spanish training for supervisors and staff in the workplace.

(iv) Skills Gaps

A major concern among employers in the state is the availability of qualified and skilled workers. A 2013 statewide survey conducted by the Nebraska Chamber of Commerce and Industry found that of the 1200 respondents, more than half, 52%, stated that they have experienced difficulties in hiring qualified employees over the previous 12-month period. These concerns were reinforced throughout a series of three focus groups that took place during 2015 to collect input for the enclosed plan. Most prevalent among these responses were the need for employees with work readiness skills and a strong willingness among employers to participate more fully in the workforce system.

A 2012 report by the National Skills Coalition found that 58% of the jobs within Nebraska in 2012 were medium-skill jobs and 28% were high-skill jobs (*“Middle Skills Jobs State by State,” 2012*). Collectively, this represents 86% of Nebraska’s workforce.

The National Skills Coalition defines medium-skill jobs as those jobs that require education beyond high school but not a four-year degree (e.g., associate degree, certificate/credential, or on-the-job experience). This includes such jobs as clerical, sales, construction, installation/repair, production and transportation/material moving and other jobs similar to those detailed in Table 5 (*“2012-2022 Occupational Projections Top 10 Most Annual Openings for Postsecondary Non-Degree Award Education Level with Entry Wages”*). The 2012 report also found that the demand for medium-skill jobs is expected to remain strong through 2022, when it is anticipated that 51% of all Nebraska jobs will entail occupations requiring medium skill, at minimum. Further, there is a present gap between the needs of employers and an available qualified workforce: despite 58%

of jobs 48% of the state's workforce possessed the requisite skills to qualify for these middle-skills job.

The study identified high-skill jobs as those jobs that require a postsecondary degree, to include professional/technical and managerial occupations and typically require a bachelor degree or advanced training. The 2012 National Skills Coalition report shows that by 2022 one in every five jobs, or 20%, will be in high-skill occupations.

In addition to job-specific and technical skills, employers within Nebraska have expressed a need for newly hired individuals to have work readiness skills. The Office of Labor Market Information surveyed businesses to determine the top O*NET skills needed by employers in the 2010 New Hires Survey. Required job skills were compared to the skills of newly hired employees. Within the top 10 skills, the top 6 matched on the new employee and required job skills rankings in order of importance. The next four skills matched but were ranked differently in priority.

(2) Workforce Development, Education and Training Activities Analysis

The State of Nebraska is proud to offer a business environment that provides resident jobseekers gainful, meaningful employment within industries that are essential to a thriving Nebraska economy. In this effort, Nebraska's workforce system relies upon the collaborative efforts of its partners including the American Job Centers and other public and private agencies situated throughout the state.

Collectively, these partners seek to ensure a comprehensive network of interrelated services addressing a wide spectrum of jobseeker and employer needs. Categorically, these entail seven major service areas, including (1) *Assessment*, (2) *Classroom Training, Work-Based Training and Instruction*, (3) *Education*, (4) *Industry Credentialing and Certification*, (5) *Supportive Services*, (6) *Employment Services* and (7) *Business Services*. These services are described below and detailed in the enclosed table.

1. **Assessments** are administered by the Nebraska's workforce investment partners according to the needs of their clients in order to gauge career interests, measure basic skills, identify specific job competencies, assess English and basic education literacy (i.e., ABE, ESL/GED), evaluate specific functional skills, and determine eligibility for public assistance. These tests collectively are designed to help the partnering programs understand the individualized needs of each worker in order to initiate targeted career interventions and supports. Developing a talent pipeline in high-demand industries is essential to serving the needs of the workforce system's two primary customers, workers and employers. A strong battery of targeted assessments ensures that jobseekers are provided appropriate services as part of an individualized, sustained workforce strategy.
2. **Classroom Training, Work-Based Training and Instruction** entail both short- and long-term options to ensure jobseekers are equipped with the work readiness skills and technical skills necessary to succeed within the demanding workplaces of the 21st Century. This includes occupational skills training, short-term on-the-job training, customized job training, job readiness training, actual work experience, incumbent

worker training, and disability skills training. Connecting its clients with an array of dynamic occupation-specific training and instructional options to meet ever changing industry requirements is an essential component of the state's workforce strategy. These ensure that jobseekers are prepared to meet industry demands and that companies have access to the skilled workforce needed to compete in the global economy.

3. **Education** is available throughout the workforce system to provide foundational education and subject matter knowledge. This includes academic and foundation skills, corrections education, GED or high school equivalency diploma, postsecondary preparation, career pathways foundations, work readiness skills, basic literacy, computer literacy, and English-as-a-Second Language instruction. The foundational knowledge imparted through workforce system's education services form a basis that is applicable across a range of industries and occupations. Workforce partners work with K-12, public and private postsecondary institutions and other education and training providers to connect jobseekers with education opportunities aligned to their specific needs.
4. **Industry Credential and Certification** encompasses the General Educational Development (GED) credential or high school equivalency credential as well as continuing education, occupational licensure, and industry certifications to provide industry-recognized credentials for entry and advancement within specific industries and occupations, particularly those high-wage, high-skill, high-demand industries and occupations that are essential to Nebraska's economy.
5. **Supportive Services** are designed to address barriers to employment. This includes the provision of such services as child care, transportation, relocation assistance, clothing, coaching, scribes, insurance coverage, utility and rent deposits, emergency financial assistance and other supports. Cognizant of the imposing barriers to employment facing disadvantaged populations within Nebraska, the workforce system offers a wide network of supports that mitigate these challenges in order to maximize workforce participation rates amongst these populations, which represent a widely untapped talent pool.
6. **Employment Services** include career planning and career counseling, labor exchange and placement services, job seeking support, job readiness training and workshops, networking and peer counseling, as well as assistance for the self-employed. These services are delivered at all stages of the employment process to new workers and the unemployed as well as incumbent workers to connect workers with potential employers and ease the transition into the workplace.
7. **Business Services** will address employers' needs through job fairs, hiring events and industry networks, compliance in meeting Americans with Disabilities Act, Section 503 and other workplace requirements, employer incentives, and worksite modifications to accommodate the needs of individuals with special workforce needs. These services are ultimately designed to support business growth and further meet industry workforce needs.

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| Workforce Development Activities Delivered by Nebraska's Core Programs | Wagner-Peyser Act | WIOA Title I | Adult Basic Education & Adult Secondary Education | Vocational Rehabilitation | Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired |
|---|-------------------|--------------|--|---------------------------|---|
| Assessments | • | • | • | • | • |
| Career Interest | • | • | • | • | • |
| Basic Skills | | • | • | • | • |
| Community- and Job-Based Evaluations | | | | • | • |
| English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) | | | • | | |
| Functional Skills | | | | • | • |
| Classroom Training, Work-Based Training & Instruction | • | • | • | • | • |
| On-the-Job Training | | • | | • | • |
| Work Experience | | • | | • | • |
| Work-Based Training | | • | • | • | • |
| Job Readiness Training | • | • | • | • | • |
| Incumbent Worker Training | | • | | • | • |
| Disability Skills Training | | | | • | • |
| Customized Job Training | | • | • | • | • |
| Education | • | • | • | • | • |
| Academic/Foundation Skills | | | • | • | • |
| Preparation for Postsecondary Education | | • | • | • | • |
| Distance Education | | | • | | |
| Career Pathways/Work Readiness Skills | • | • | • | • | • |
| Computer Literacy | | | • | | • |
| English-as-a-Second Language | | • | • | • | • |
| Industry Credential and Certification | | • | • | • | • |
| General Educational Development (GED) Credential | | | • | | |
| Post-Secondary Credentialing | | • | • | • | • |
| Licensure | | | | • | |
| Supportive Services | | • | | • | • |
| Transportation, child care, personal care assistance, relocation assistance, emergency financial assistance (e.g., rent deposits, utilities, care repairs), application fees, benefits planning, etc. | | | | | |
| Employment Services | • | • | • | • | • |
| Career Planning and Career Counseling | • | • | • | • | • |
| Labor Exchange and Placement Services | • | • | | • | • |
| Job Seeking/Job Readiness Skills | • | • | • | • | • |
| Networking/Peer Counseling (Job Clubs) | | • | | • | • |
| Self-Employment | | | | • | • |
| Business Services | • | • | • | • | • |
| Job Fairs/Hiring Events/Networks | • | | | | |
| Regulatory Compliance (ADA, 503, Federal Contracting) | • | | | • | • |
| Employer Incentives | • | | | • | • |
| Worksite Modification | | | | • | • |

Nebraska and its workforce partners have established and maintained a broad network of services as part of its strategy to create a strong workforce system. Embedded within this system, however, are several strengths and weaknesses identified as follows. These strengths and weaknesses have been accounted for through the vision, goals and specific outcomes guiding Nebraska's Combined State Plan.

Key Strengths include:

- **NEworks, Nebraska's Management Information System**, equipping the combined plan partners with a powerful technological tool that offers a wealth of workforce data as well as resources for both employers and current/prospective workers. Beyond its present use, this technology can serve to potentially improve coordination of program services, enhance communication between partners, and track relevant participant outcomes.
- A **comprehensive range of high-quality workforce development services**. From initial assessment to job placement, the combined plan programs offer an array of high-quality, targeted services that are geared toward the needs of the state's employers and those seeking employment.
- **Cost-efficiency in the delivery of services**. Despite geographic, financial, programmatic and other constraints, the plan partners have cost-efficiently delivered their services to jobseekers and workers throughout the state. The extent to which these entities have continually maximized the quality and reach of their services is a strength that is capitalized upon in the combined plan.
- **Strong partnerships between plan partners** as well as public and private partners. The strength of these partnerships is evident in their strong contributions to the design and execution of this plan, as described throughout this document, as well as the strength of the existing collaborations between partners.
- And a **strong technology infrastructure** that is capable of supporting the business growth and expansion targeted through the combined plan. A 2014 report by the Nebraska Information Technology Commission found that Broadband service, with download speeds of greater than 10Mbps, is available to 99.5% of the state's population (*Broadband in Nebraska, 2014*). Widespread access to broadband given the geographic challenges in an expansive state with several rural areas is a tremendous strength that will be leveraged throughout the implementation of the Combined Plan.

Collectively, these strengths form a tremendous foundation upon which Nebraska's state plan is designed and anticipated to flourish.

Key Weaknesses limit the partner programs' ability to better serve the needs of its workforce customers. These weaknesses include:

- **Widespread dispersion of various populations within the state**. The placement of Nebraskans who face barriers to employment (e.g., low-income individuals; individuals with disabilities; ex-offenders; homeless individuals; youth who have aged out of the foster care system; English Language Learners; individuals with low levels of literacy;

single parents; farmworkers; those within two years of exhausting lifetime TANF eligibility; and the long-term unemployed) present unique challenges in communicating and coordinating services to areas where these populations reside. This includes remote rural areas, areas with capacity issues and those affected by other factors that complicate workforce service delivery.

- **Limited industry sector involvement in the workforce system.** There is a strong willingness among both industry and the public sector to work collaboratively in promoting workforce development within the state. Yet, more needs to be done in order to formalize and leverage the potential contributions of the industry sector.
- **Need to strengthen communication between workforce partners.** Despite the availability of high quality programs and a willingness to collaborate, the partner programs sometimes struggle to communicate in a timely fashion in order to coordinate programming and avoid duplication of efforts. This is especially true at the front-line service-delivery level.
- **Absence of a common intake form** and intake procedures results in a duplication of efforts and is indicative of the previously mentioned lack of communication that currently exists between programs.
- **Common terminology for key workforce development terms** is yet another source of weakness that disrupts communication and understanding necessary for an effective, efficient statewide workforce strategy.

Each of the partnering workforce entities represented within this plan possess a modernized technological infrastructure, committed staff and a strong willingness to strengthen workforce development within the state. The capacity for increased communication between Nebraska's workforce development programs is extremely strong. Technologically, Nebraska has the tools necessary to foster increased communication including data sharing and a willingness amongst the programs' staffs to improve in this area of great need.

(b) Nebraska's Strategic Vision and Goals

(1) Vision

In the midst of a labor market that is rapidly changing and an economy that is becoming increasingly more global in scope, the great state of Nebraska and its workforce development partners face an array of imposing challenges to maintain a thriving economy. These challenges, which range from labor shortages in demand industries to ever-changing industry standards to employment barriers for underrepresented populations, must be met in order to create a business environment that sufficiently serves the needs of both jobseekers and employers alike. Nebraska's vision represents the collective expertise of the strong and committed network of workforce development partners to establish a workforce system within Nebraska that maximizes the collective resources available within the state workforce system, recognizes the unique characteristics and needs of the state's diverse geographic regions, provides (whenever and wherever available) competitive advantages to business, and positions Nebraska economically for global competitiveness.

Nebraska's vision for its workforce system maintains a dual-customer focus amongst the partner programs by (1) seamlessly administering services to jobseekers at all stages of the employment spectrum *and by* (2) furnishing employers with the skilled workforce they desperately need to grow and thrive in a global economy. This includes employment, re-employment and advanced employment for Nebraska workers.

Primary to this vision is strong communication between partnering programs as well as other workforce development entities throughout the state in order to streamline services and foster coordinated strategies in meeting the needs of the workforce system's two primary customers, employers and workers.

Central also to this vision is maintaining a strong understanding of employers' specific workforce needs and developing proactive strategies that respond to these needs with timely and targeted interventions. Given the rapid changes that frequently occur within the current global economy, Nebraska's workforce system must remain fully aware of the specific experience, education, and credentials, as well as skills and competencies required within the state's high-demand industry sectors. It must also strengthen career pathways into these industries through enhanced access, services, education and training options. The state's vision therefore relies upon strategies that respond to these needs of its employers, including sector-specific strategies.

Cognizant of ever-increasing capacity constraints across programs, Nebraska's vision for workforce development entails a collaborative effort where partnering programs leverage the collective resources of the state's workforce partners as a whole. This will allow for the sharing of resources more freely and realization of efficiencies in service delivery resulting in increased economic impact.

Meeting the imposing challenges facing Nebraska's workforce system is essential to ensuring that jobseekers and employers within Nebraska are provided with an environment that meets their unique workforce needs. Embedded within these challenges, however, are vast opportunities to enhance Nebraska's strong track record in providing both businesses and jobseekers alike with an environment that supports business growth and promotes gainful employment for all Nebraska residents.

(2) Goals

In support of Nebraska's vision for a unified, systematic approach to workforce development, four major goals have been identified to prepare an educated and skilled workforce that meets the workforce needs of employers through 2020. These four goals articulate a coordinated approach and seek to establish an economic climate that serves employers, workers and those communities where these stakeholders operate and work, respectively.

Developed with significant input from key stakeholder groups, these goals respond to the identified capacity gaps and weaknesses within Nebraska's workforce system as described; build upon the strengths of the partnering programs; meet present and anticipated challenges and labor needs; account for the unique workforce characteristics within Nebraska and its workforce

regions, and establish a climate that serves the workforce system key stakeholders. Most notably this includes the preparation of an educated and skilled workforce and meeting the workforce needs of Nebraska's employers

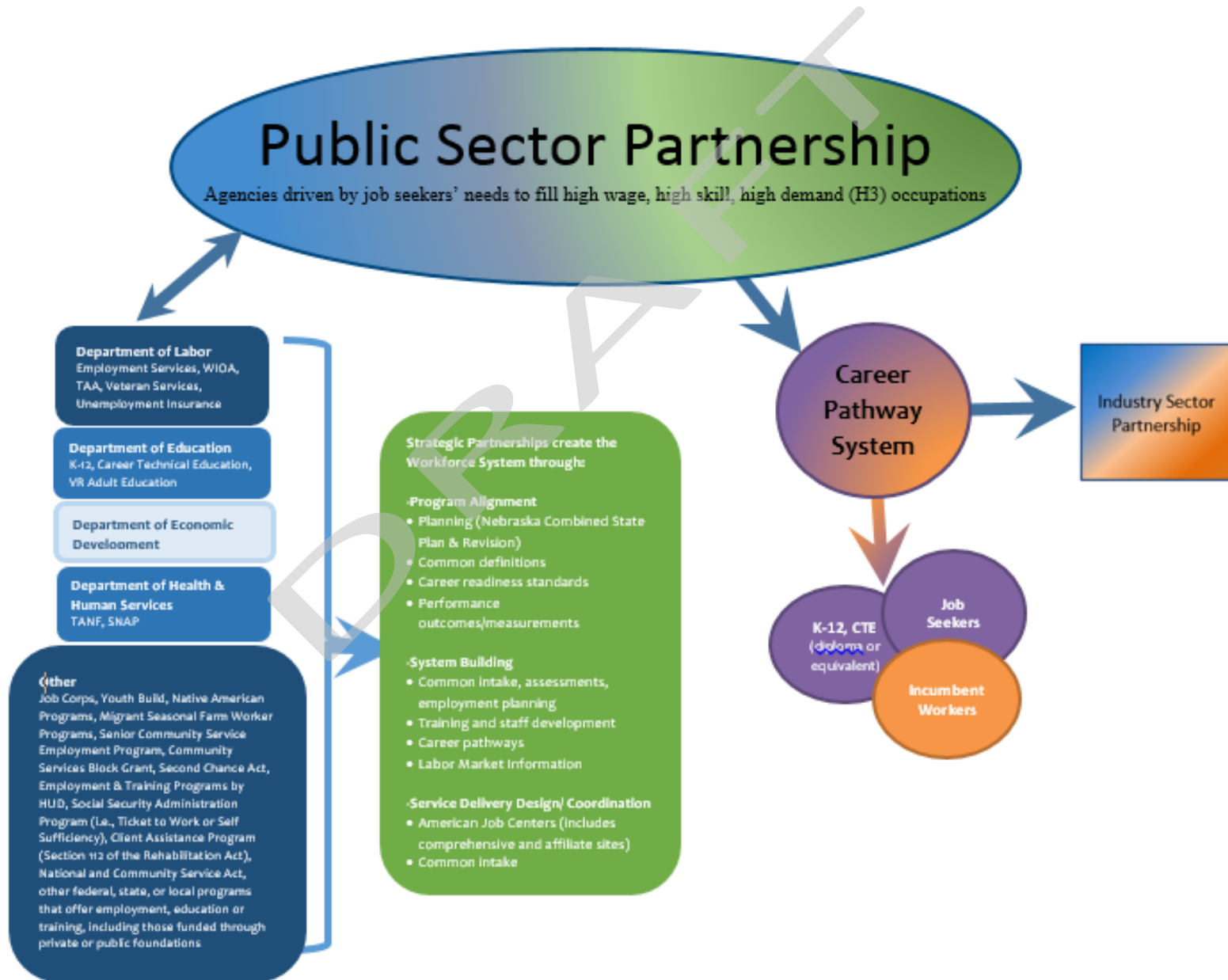
Goal 1: Nebraska *will* enhance coordination between plan partners and other key stakeholders at all stages of the workforce development spectrum to ensure jobseekers and businesses are provided coordinated and seamless services, reducing duplication of effort, better understanding the needs of employers and workers, and maximizing the resources available to the state's workforce partners.

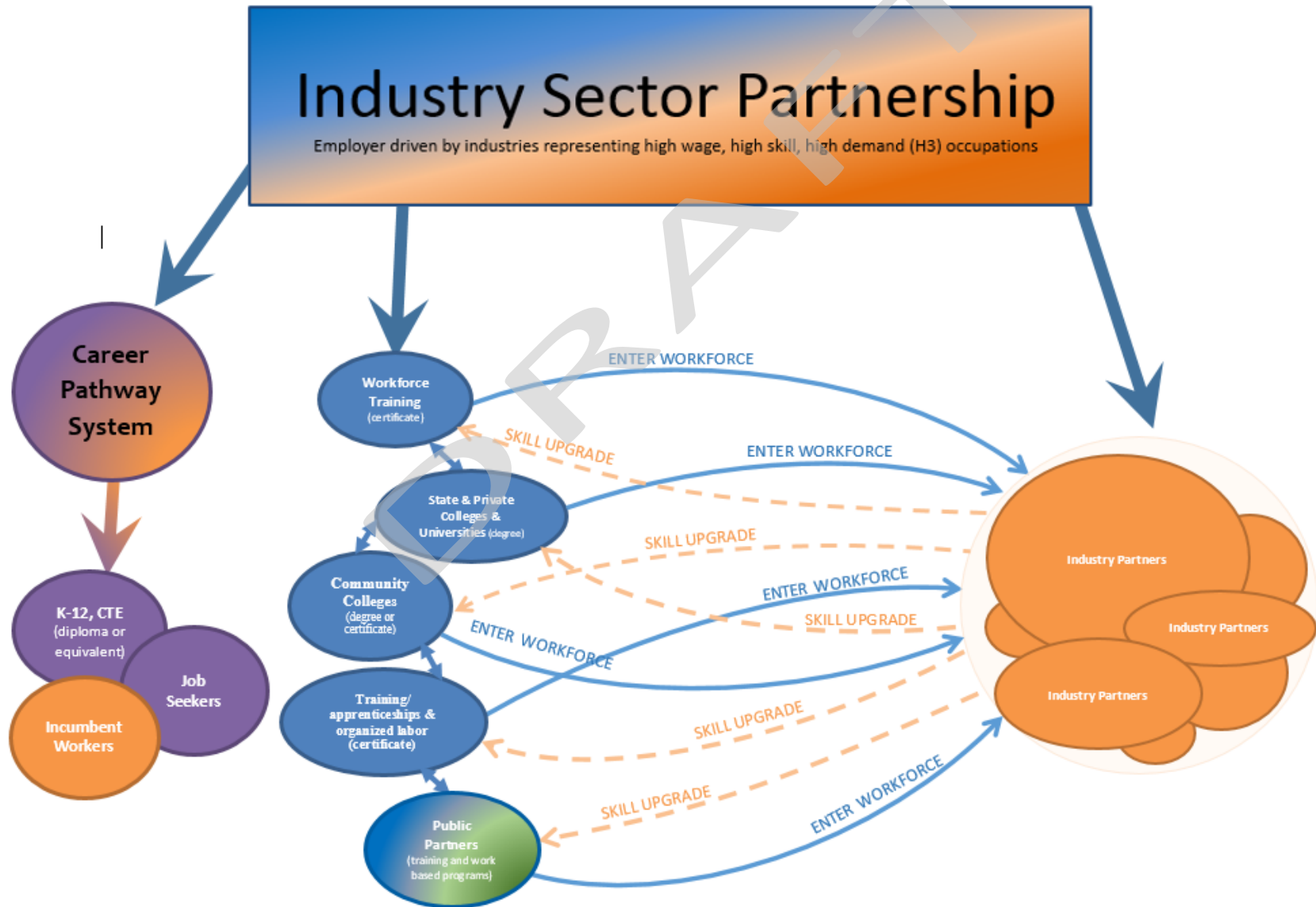
Goal 2: Nebraska *will* increase workforce participation across Nebraska by expanding access, support and service to assessment, education, training, employment services and other forms of assistance that prepare low-income individuals, English Language Learners, single parents, farmworkers, the unemployed and other disadvantaged populations for rewarding careers within the region.

Goal 3: Nebraska *will* enhance employer engagement between secondary and post-secondary education and/or training programs to better meet employers' workforce needs through industry-driven strategies that ensure the availability of the skilled workforce to drive growth within the state's high-wage, high-skill and high-demand industries and occupations.

Goal 4: Nebraska *will* promote self-sufficiency among Nebraska's disadvantaged populations by eliminating barriers to employment and providing coordinated services that lead to gainful employment.

The achievement of Nebraska's vision and goals will be anchored by implementing and bringing together Public Sector and Industry Sector Partnerships. Draft concepts on how these partnerships may work are illustrated in the following two diagrams.





The following sections of the Combined State Plan outline the specific strategies to be implemented in addressing the stated vision and goals, and also include a plan for assessing progress toward their attainment. Operational plans for each of the plan partners are included to show further alignment with the Combined Plan.

(3) Performance Goals

The Performance Goals for the 2016 and 2017 program years, as described in section 116(b)(2)(A) of WIOA, will be negotiated with the Secretary of Labor in conjunction with the Secretary of Education. A plan for assessing the progress made toward the measures to be established is described in the following section "Assessment."

(4) Assessment

Assessment of the partner programs' progress toward these goals will entail the collaborative efforts of the core programs and other plan partners in order to collect and analyze timely data and make, as necessary, strategic modifications in order to maintain progress toward its vision, goals and strategies as described.

In assessing progress, data will be identified, collected in appropriate frequencies, and analyzed by the core programs, combined plan partners, and relevant stakeholders including the Nebraska Workforce Development Board. Data to be collected will include employment rates, median earnings, credential attainment rates, measurable skills gains, H-1B visa application data, and other data to indicate progress and support the management of the workforce system. In reviewing the data, the partners will seek to identify in a prompt fashion any negative trends or gaps in the performance measures in order to initiate the necessary program refinements as part of a continuous improvement approach.

(c) State Strategy

(1) Strategies

Nebraska's combined plan partners have identified several interrelated strategies to achieve its strategic vision and goals. As described in the previous section, Nebraska's vision is a streamlined workforce system that meets the needs of both employers and workers. To support this vision, the state has developed a series of strategies to support each of the Plan's four goals.

Goal 1: Nebraska will enhance coordination between plan partners and other key stakeholders at all stages of the workforce development spectrum to ensure jobseekers and businesses are provided coordinated and seamless services, reducing duplication of effort, better understanding the needs of employers and workers, and maximizing the resources available to the state's workforce partners.

- *Strategy #1: Development of common intake procedures.* The plan partners will work closely to explore, develop, test and refine common intake procedures that integrate the intake process across the programs. The effort to establish a common intake will increase coordination between the plan partners to identify what information is

currently being collected and what should be shared. Privacy laws will be regularly analyzed and observed throughout this process to ensure the protection of human subjects and meet federal laws.

- *Strategy #2: Development and alignment of terminology across programs.* The establishment of common terminology across programs is not only essential to a common intake, but it is also necessary to foster greater coordination among the partner programs at all stages of the service-delivery spectrum.
- *Strategy #3: Coordination of funding streams.* Nebraska's Combined State Plan is designed to serve a broad range of jobseekers and employers. To effectively serve these workforce customers, Nebraska must strategically align and utilize all of its resources in order to effectively reach all customers with appropriate levels of service and support. A significant portion of this strategy will take place throughout the Memorandum of Understanding process.
- *Strategy #4: Technological integration.* The alignment of data systems will be necessary to foster data sharing in order to provide the real-time data necessary to initiate appropriate services, assess service delivery, complete WIOA common reporting requirements, and the subsequent program refinements necessary for continuous project improvement.
- *Strategy #5: Development of policies around common subject matter in order to define protocol and provide guidance across partner programs.* Given the enhanced level of coordination to occur, policies will be developed that specify clear courses of actions, set clear expectations, guide decision-making and support outcomes.
- *Strategy #6: Collaborative assessment of systems to ensure continuous improvement.* As part of a more coordinated approach to workforce development, the plan partners will meet regularly for planning purposes, information sharing, resource leveraging and continuous system improvement. Using data generated by the plan partners' individual data systems, the partners will assess progress, identify trends and gaps (negative or positive), and determine what, if any, additional strategies are necessary.
- *Strategy #7: Establishment of a Public Sector Partnership* involving each of the plan partners, to support the alignment of workforce policies, systems, and terminology within the state. Functioning as a working committee, the Public Sector Partnership will provide the shared governance, day-to-day coordination and leadership needed to guide enhanced workforce development partnerships among public sector programs.
- *Strategy #8: Coordination with local and regional areas* in order to further strengthen workforce alignment and coordination across the State. This will include outreach and coordination with the American Job Centers, eligible training providers and other local workforce programs to enhance service to employers and jobseekers, especially those who face barriers to employment, and/or individuals with low literacy and individuals with disabilities.

Goal 2: Nebraska will increase workforce participation across Nebraska by expanding access, support and service to assessment, education, training, employment services and other forms of assistance that prepare low-income individuals, English Language Learners, single parents, farmworkers, the unemployed and other disadvantaged populations for rewarding careers within the region.

- *Strategy #1: Sector strategies will be developed and implemented.* Nebraska is working to develop a replicable framework for supporting the implementation of industry sector strategies within the state. Strategies will focus on industries that are essential to the economic vitality of the state's communities and regions, support and strengthen businesses within the state, and offer employment opportunities to residents (with priority on low-income individuals, English Language Learners, single parents, farmworkers, the unemployed and other disadvantaged populations).
- *Strategy #2: Promotion of "H3" jobs.* Nebraska will leverage its recently developed H3 website (H3.ne.gov) to provide information to students, unemployed, underemployed and new workers on high-wage, high-skill and high-demand jobs in Nebraska. This will include working closely with each of the plan partners and other potential workforce partners (from the private and public sectors) on the website's resources and utility as part of a local, regional and statewide workforce development strategy.
- *Strategy #3: Targeted distribution of available funding streams.* The state and its workforce systems partners manage several funding streams that are designed to support entry into the workforce through the provision of training, education and other services. Review and alignment of these resources will occur both on an agency and statewide level to identify funding gaps and reallocate resources, if necessary, to better address the needs of such populations as low-income individuals; individuals with disabilities; ex-offenders; homeless individuals; youth who have aged out of the foster care system; English Language Learners; individuals with low levels of literacy; single parents; farmworkers; those within two years of exhausting lifetime TANF eligibility; and the long-term unemployed.
- *Strategy #4: Development of Career Pathways.* Nebraska careers are organized into six career fields covering 16 career clusters. This model, which is co-sponsored by the Nebraska Departments of Education and Labor, Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation, Partnerships for Innovation and the Nebraska Public Power District, provides a framework and associated resources for students, educators, parents, adults, employers and workforce development agencies to support career development. Ongoing development and integration of this tool across programs will occur to help ensure Nebraska's future workforce possesses the skills, training and knowledge sought by employers.
- *Strategy #5: Fostered alignment of education, credentialing and placement.* Nebraska's plan to increase workforce participation involves multiple strategies including sector strategies and career pathways. Alignment of these resources with

other resources that support workforce entry will be addressed. This specifically includes new and emerging workforce needs, such as those presented by new and emerging industries, regional demand, population dynamics and other factors. Coordination will include ongoing identification of workforce needs and opportunities, alignment education and training options (and resources that promote their accessibility), and the defining of workforce requirements.

- *Strategy #6: Acquisition of new funding streams and the leveraging of new resources to enhance services available to those seeking first-time employment and reemployment and Nebraska's working poor.* Plan partners will seek grant and other funding opportunities available at the federal and local areas that address the needs of unemployed and future workers through enhanced training, education and access. This strategy will also entail the development of partnerships with nonprofit and workforce entities throughout the state to share resources and provide support to maximize their efforts.
- *Strategy #7: Working closely with each WIOA-designated region to assess and refine the delivery of services* in order to establish a service delivery model that is responsive to the needs of jobseekers and employers, is accessible given the unique challenges faced by residents within the area, is capable of fully leveraging the resources available at the local, state, and federal levels, and is coordinating with other public and private workforce entities to maximize impact.

Goal 3: Nebraska will enhance employer engagement between secondary and post-secondary education and/or training programs to better meet employers' workforce needs through industry-driven strategies that ensure the availability of the skilled workforce to drive growth within the state's high-wage, high-skill and high-demand industries and occupations.

- *Strategy #1: Develop Industry Sector Strategies for employers to collaborate with system partners.* The state needs to ensure that the limited resources available for education, training and career development are closely aligned with the industry sectors that are essential to the state's existing and emerging occupations. Partners in Nebraska's workforce system must enhance their ability to engage meaningfully with employers within the industry sectors by ensuring there are effective forums for employers to collaborate with each other and to work with the workforce system's partners. The state will forge private sector partnerships with employers through state and local human resources associations and industry-specific associations and groups.
- *Strategy #2: Data-driven decision making that targets high-wage, high-skill and high-demand jobs.* Using timely Labor Market Information, employment projections and information gathered directly from employers, the partner programs will devise strategies to ensure Nebraska businesses have the talent needed to thrive in a global economy. This may include new and customized training options, work-based learning opportunities, collaboration with state and local economic development

agencies to implement industry sector strategies, and other initiatives that respond to the needs presented in the data and expressed directly by employers.

- *Strategy #3: Promoting career readiness.* Skills gaps will be identified regularly during the execution of the four-year plan using the Nebraska Career Readiness Standards established by the Nebraska Department of Education with extensive input from businesses and industries. Addressing these skills will entail identification of the specific skill set, inventory of available education and training to address the skill, promotion of the skill (cross-referenced to the industries and fields where it is desired) through the H3 website and Nebraska's Career Education Model, and, if necessary, rapid development and deployment of trainings that address the skills need.
- *Strategy #4: Continuous improvement in workforce development strategies* in order to better meet the needs of the Nebraska businesses. A variety of data, including performance metrics data, H-1B visa data, and employer surveys will be analyzed to assess the overall effectiveness of Nebraska workforce system in meeting the workforce needs of Nebraska's employers. This process will be initiated to foster continuous improvement.
- *Strategy #5: Expansion of work-based learning opportunities.* The plan partners will promote apprenticeships, internships and other work-based learning opportunities as an essential component of a comprehensive approach to workforce development in the state. Work-based learning offers potential workers with the opportunity to immerse within a potential career field while also providing invaluable education and training in a particular field.
- *Strategy #6: Targeted outreach to disadvantaged populations* such as low-income individuals; individuals with disabilities; ex-offenders; homeless individuals; youth who have aged out of the foster care system; English Language Learners; individuals with low levels of literacy; single parents; farmworkers; those within two years of exhausting lifetime TANF eligibility; and the long-term unemployed. Strategies will be designed to provide employers with an expanded labor pool of talented workers and to provide appropriate education, training and support to those populations that would most benefit from employment in Nebraska high-wage, high-skill, high-demand industries.

Goal 4: Nebraska will promote self-sufficiency among Nebraska's disadvantaged populations by eliminating barriers to employment and providing coordinated services that lead to gainful employment

- *Strategy #1: Enhanced access to available services.* Work collaboratively with American Job Centers and other programs throughout the state to strategically serve the needs of low-income individuals and other populations facing barriers to employment within the state. This strategy will include continued development of online resources and identification and dissemination of best practices.

- *Strategy #2: Targeted acquisition of funding and other resources.* Plan partners will pursue funding opportunities through local, regional and federal sources in order to expand the workforce resources available to low-income, English Language Learners, individuals with disabilities, migrant farmworkers and other populations experiencing barriers. This will include opportunities that strengthen coordination between the partners. It will also include working closely with individual regions and programs to review and support applications targeting specific geographic regions.
- *Strategy #3: Continued development and dissemination of online resources.* This will entail efforts that promote access and the distribution of essential workforce-related information to individuals facing barriers to employment. This will include the development of online information and training American Job Centers staff and other partners within communities throughout Nebraska to utilize the information available online. Access of this information will be a priority. As appropriate, resources will be available in English, Spanish and other languages. Cognizant of the technology barriers facing the disadvantaged populations to be served by this Plan, information will also be made available in print format.
- *Strategy #4: Enhanced data sharing and analysis amongst the plan partners.* The plan partners will utilize a variety of data to better understand the specific challenges facing low-income and other disadvantaged populations within Nebraska's workforce system. This data will be reviewed regularly in order to develop interventions of appropriate nature and scope, assess these interventions for effectiveness in supporting the targeted populations, and to implement a continuous improvement approach.
- *Strategy #5: Promote knowledge transfers across partner programs to help facilitate referrals.* This will include training to plan partner staff on services across programs administered by system partners. Further supporting this strategy, will be the development of cross-training materials that can be used by partners during orientation for new hires, and the development of a protocol for referrals between partners.

Sector-Specific Strategies and Career Pathways

Two major activities to occur over the course of the four-year plan that intersect several of the goals are Sector-Specific Strategies and Career Pathways.

Sector-specific strategies are designed to respond to the needs of employers within in-demand industry sectors, establish a pipeline of skilled workers for targeted industries, increase employment opportunities for unemployed and underemployed workers, and to establish a data-driven approach to addressing talent shortages. Sector strategies entail (1) Program Alignment; (2) System Building; and (3) Service Delivery Design/Coordination.

- 1) *Program Alignment* will include developing common goals and terminology necessary to guide the development of Nebraska's Sector Strategy state model. This will include strategic workforce planning, the alignment of terminology and associated definitions used between workforce development programs toward a

common understanding, the establishment of career readiness standards, and the identification of performance outcomes and measurements.

- 2) *System Building* will develop and continually refine resources and tools that can be utilized by regions as they implement the Sector Strategy model. This includes the development of common intake forms and assessments, stakeholder training and staff development, gathering and review of labor market information, and the identification of career pathways.
- 3) *Service Delivery Design/Coordination* will involve collaborative work with Nebraska's job centers in order to consistently administer the common intake form and begin the talent pipeline process by identifying students, underemployed workers, unemployed workers and incumbent workers with the potential to enter the identified career cluster talent pipeline.

Sector-specific strategies have been identified by the partner programs as a promising strategy to further promoting economic and workforce development in the state. To this end, representatives from each of the programs and other stakeholder groups have attended training in sector strategy development and execution, and are committed to continue developing strategies that meet the specific needs of employers and potential workers in Nebraska's in-demand industries.

Another promising strategy to support Nebraska's vision for workforce development is the ongoing development of **career pathways**. In 2008, the Nebraska Department of Education/Career Technical Education adopted and began implementing the National Career Pathway Model developed by the Office of Vocational and Adult Education. The Nebraska Career Education Model organizes Nebraska careers into six career fields including (1) Business, Marketing & Management; (2) Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources; (3) Communication and Information Systems; (4) Human Services and Education; (5) Health Sciences and (6) Skilled and Technical Sciences. The six career fields entail a multitude of professions and jobs.

To support this career education model, Nebraska has established Career Readiness Standards which describe varieties of expertise that educators at all levels should seek to develop in their students. The Nebraska Career Readiness Standards were derived from extensive input from business and industry representatives expressing the most critical skills needed for employees to be successful on the job. Career Readiness Standards are often referred to as work readiness skills or soft skills. These standards rest on important "practices and proficiencies" with long-standing importance in career education. The standards and related practices are not limited to formal career technical education programs nor to the middle school or high school level. Rather, these standards and practices should be reinforced repeatedly, with increasing complexity and relevance by students and jobseekers as they progress through their career pathway. The standards themselves do not dictate curriculum, pedagogy or delivery of



content, and schools, colleges, and service providers implement the teaching and assessing of these standards in many different ways.

The Career Pathway Model has been adopted by schools and school districts throughout the state to facilitate career exploration and planning as well as to guide the alignment of curriculum and education offerings. The former Nebraska Workforce Investment Board adopted the Career Pathway Model in 2008 to align work readiness services and career exploration with Nebraska's one-stop delivery system. The plan partners will work collaboratively to promote the adoption of this model and the Career Readiness Standards within education programs, update industry and skills requirements, and continuously assess the impact of the Career Pathway Model.

(2) Program Alignment

Nebraska has identified several strategies to align the core programs, combined plan partners, and other workforce partners to achieve a fully integrated approach to workforce development within Nebraska. These approaches will include increased coordination, enhanced data sharing, resource leveraging, career pathways, sector strategies, shared governance, alignment of technology systems, policy development and other reforms that guide and support the alignment to occur through the plan.

Key action steps include:

- Enhanced Memorandum of Understanding Process between the State and Local Areas.
- Collaborative Planning Process on System Development including common intake, shared technology, common service delivery.
- Establish Industry Driven Sector Strategy at the local and regional levels.
- Establish Public Sector Partnerships including all workforce system stakeholders.

III. OPERATIONAL PLANNING ELEMENTS

(a) State Strategy Implementation

(1) State Board Functions

The Nebraska Workforce Development Board under Section 101(d) of WIOA is responsible for maintaining a dynamic, demand-driven workforce system focusing on high-wage, high-skill, high-demand industries within a regional development context. This includes the integration of services to employers and job seekers by a network of public and private partners. The Board also works to meet the changing long and short term needs of businesses and individuals with a coordinated, efficient, and less bureaucratic delivery system, and to provide all Nebraska residents with the knowledge, skills and resources for learning, earning and living in the state.

Specific functions performed by Nebraska's Workforce Development Board under 101(d) of WIOA include:

- Develop and implement State Plan
- Provide recommendations to help align the workforce system in the state
- Increase activity in developing career pathways
- Unify workforce investment activities with education and supportive services in the development of career pathways
- Improve outreach and access to programs

- Develop strategies for meeting the needs of employers and jobseekers through sector partnerships (with an emphasis on in-demand industries and occupations)
- Develop and implement the one-stop system, including continuous improvement of the one-stop system
- Provide assistance to local boards, one-stop operators and their partners
- Assist with planning, including training and supportive services to workers, jobseekers, and employers
- Identify regions in consultation with the local boards and CEOs, and provides consultation to the Governor in the designation of local areas
- Assist the Governor in the development and updating of comprehensive state performance accountability measures, including state-adjusted levels of performance, to assess the effectiveness of the four WIOA core programs under 101(d)(4)
- Develop policies to coordinate services
- Develop criteria and procedures for local board to use in assessing core programs
- Develop guidance tom local boards on infrastructure costs and defining what one-stop partners must do to contribute to the services delivered through the one-stop system
- Define the role and contributions of one-stop partners, including equitable and efficient cost allocation
- Develop strategies to improve technology for digital literacy, accelerating learning, accessibility, and professional development
- Review the Combined State Plan at the end of the first 2-year period of any 4-year plan to submit modifications relating to labor market information, economic conditions, or other factors affecting the plan
- Help in designing the evaluations of State Programs under section 116(e)

(2) Implementation of State Strategy

(A) Core Program Activities to Implement Nebraska's Strategy

Nebraska's core programs and its combined plan partners have identified several key activities that will further extend employment services to disadvantaged workers, expand training and education options, and strengthen the alignment of resources across Nebraska's workforce system. The goals and supporting strategies are restated below and include a description of the specific activities to be conducted by the partners to execute the activities.

Goal 1: Enhanced Coordination

1. *Development of common intake procedures.*
2. *Development and alignment of terminology across programs.*
3. *Coordination of funding streams.*
4. *Technological integration.*
5. *Development of policies around common subject matter in order to define protocol and provide guidance across partner programs*
6. *Collaborative assessment of systems to ensure continuous improvement.*

7. *Establishment of a Public Sector Partnership.*
8. *Coordination with local and regional areas.*

The core programs with its additional plan partners will: provide leadership for the plan through the establishment of a Public Sector Partnership and through membership on the Nebraska Workforce Development Board; provide leadership and coordination for the development of a common intake system to streamline service delivery across the workforce system; leverage agency personnel and other resources to ensure appropriate support and oversight; implement evaluation and continuous improvement efforts; analyze current funding streams to inform potential reallocation for more targeted distribution; support efforts to integrate technological systems; and develop policies and procedures around common subject matter.

Goal 2: Increased Workforce Participation

1. *Sector Strategies will be developed and implemented.*
2. *Promotion of "H3" jobs.*
3. *Targeted distribution of available funding streams.*
4. *Development of Career Pathways.*
5. *Fostered alignment of education, credentialing and placement.*
6. *Acquisition of new funding streams and the leveraging of new resources to enhance services available to those seeking first-time employment, reemployment, and Nebraska's working poor*
7. *Working closely with each WIOA-designated region to assess and refine the delivery of services*

Increasing workforce participation will require the participation of each of the partner programs. This will entail the development of strategies that create new job opportunities and strategies that support the entry and retention of individuals in the workplace, including those workers who face barriers to employment. Initially, assessments will be administered by the respective programs to identify individual needs which will then trigger the prescription of services and supports to address the identified need(s). The provision of these services will be strengthened as a result of the increased coordination targeted through Goal 1, and more specifically through the common intake process which will streamline the initiation of services across the programs. These services entail a continuum of supports from education and training to workforce modifications.

Career Pathways will help prepare individuals with the requisite training and knowledge for a variety of career fields, to ease the transition to the workplace. Sector strategies will involve strategic partnership targeting key industries and occupations in a local, regional or state context. Sector strategies will support business growth but also foster new employment opportunities.

Enhanced data sharing will provide regional partners (including the American Job Centers, educational institutions, and training providers) with useful data to guide the strategic development of services and educational/training options. The state will work with these entities to not only use the data in a strategic manner but also to share in the exchange of data to inform

the allocation of resources within the state and the development of new statewide workforce initiatives.

Within this process, the programs will continually collect and analyze program data. The assessment of data will serve to identify areas of strength and weakness. The information produced from regular analysis will help to initiate programmatic improvements and foster continuous improvement in serving those outside of the workforce.

Goal 3: Enhanced employer engagement between secondary and post-secondary education and/or training programs to better meet employers' workforce needs

1. *Data-driven decision making that targets high-wage, high-skill, high-demand jobs.*
2. *Promoting career readiness.*
3. *Continuous improvement in workforce development strategies.*
4. *Expansion of work-based learning opportunities.*
5. *Targeted outreach to disadvantaged workers.*
6. *Develop forums for employers to collaborate with system partners.*

Each of the combined plan programs will be critical partners in the effort to strengthen the alignment between education and training available in the state and the needs of employers. The strength of this alignment will rest primarily on the collection, sharing and analysis of relevant data that confirm current and emerging high-wage, high-skill, high-demand occupations and the associated skills sets needed for these jobs. High-wage, high-skill, high-demand jobs are essential factors in Nebraska's workforce development effort as they not only provide strong employment opportunities to a potentially large number of Nebraskans, but they also promote economic activity necessary to a thriving economy. The partners will work closely to identify high-wage, high-skill, high-demand jobs and work their various agency channels (including partners, electronic and print materials, etc.) to promote these career fields and coordinate services that help transition potential workers into these fields through education and training, employer services, accommodations and workforce modifications for those with disabilities, and/or support services to workers facing barriers.

Assessment of these strategies and approaches will be ongoing using data generated through Labor Market Information, employer surveys, employment projections and unemployment wage data.

Goal 4: Promote self-sufficiency among low-income and other disadvantaged populations

1. *Enhanced access to available services.*
2. *Targeted acquisition of funding and other resources.*
3. *Continued development and dissemination of online resources.*
4. *Enhanced data sharing and analysis amongst the plan partners.*
5. *Promote knowledge transfers across partner programs to help facilitate referrals.*

Low-income and other disadvantaged populations represent a tremendous untapped resource in terms of workforce talent, and strategies will be coordinated through each of the combined

plan programs to connect these populations with gainful employment. Specifically, this will include strategies that target low-income individuals; individuals with disabilities; ex-offenders; homeless individuals; youth who have aged out of the foster care system; English Language Learners; individuals with low levels of literacy; single parents; farmworkers; those within two years of exhausting lifetime TANF eligibility; the long-term unemployed and other disadvantaged populations. Several of the strategies to be implemented through the state plan will dovetail and expand support for these populations in order to cultivate the skilled workforce sought by employers and to serve employment needs of Nebraska's disadvantaged workers.

Enhanced access will occur through the reallocation of resources based upon data analysis and/or the increased efficiencies to be realized as a result of the plan's implementation. Additional resources will also be leveraged, as appropriate, from local, state and federal sources to expand and extend workforce services for low-income and disadvantaged populations. NEworks and the Nebraska Career Connections sites will be updated regularly with current information and resources to eliminate barriers to training, education and employment.

Unemployment wage data will be reviewed regularly by the partners to determine the extent of need within the state and its communities. Ongoing assessment of the individual services will also be conducted regularly to continually assess and refine the delivery of services to low-income and other disadvantaged populations of workers.

(B) Alignment with Activities Outside the Plan

Cognizant of the important workforce contributions provided by private and public entities within the state, Nebraska's plan will be supported by several activities that align and leverage these resources. The most successful sector strategies and career pathways rely on the participation of employers, community-based agencies and other agencies in an effort to pool resources for a common workforce purpose.

Community colleges will continue to serve as an essential partner in the workforce system providing education and training, aligning to industry standards, reaching underrepresented populations and forging bridges that extend from K-12 education to employment. Economic development strategies are often initiated at the local level. The state will seek to support efforts locally through the provision of data. Local efforts may also include grant initiatives from private local sources or federal grant-making programs. As appropriate, the programs will seek to coordinate, support, and participate in initiatives that strategically promote workforce development in the state.

(C) Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Individuals

Nebraska's workforce system features a variety of supports and services to help individuals enter and succeed in the workforce. These services extend from school-based education to targeted interventions that meet the needs of specific populations of workers. Coordination and alignment of these services have been an ongoing focus of the partner programs' work in recent years and will be further strengthened through the enclosed combined plan.

The development of a common intake system will provide a tremendous boost to the programs' efforts in serving their clients. As is the case with many programs, available resources are limited and efforts that reduce duplication can help to maximize outreach and ultimately participant outcomes. The common intake system will not only serve to avoid duplication but it will also help the partners to coordinate services in a timely manner. Sector strategies and career pathways, by design, are geared to serve both potential workers and employers. Workers will benefit from gainful employment opportunities, with special emphasis on high potential jobs.

Services are also coordinated through several local agencies including American Job Centers, local VR offices and eligible training providers. These entities help to assess and deliver services. Sharing of data will be a major focus of the plan to better coordinate these services, allocate resources, devise strategies and support data-driven decision making at all stages of the workforce system.

In addition to these, Nebraska's NEworks' management information system and its Career Connections sites offer an array of information for individuals, including students, youth, adults, veterans, senior citizens, and others. These sites feature job postings, information on training and education options, career exploration, labor market and wage information, information on supportive services, and other information as well to help inform individuals about careers and facilitate their transition to the workplace.

(D) Coordination, Alignment and Provision of Services to Employers

Both the NEworks and Nebraska Career Connections sites contain resources specific to employers to further integrate them into a coordinated workforce system. NEworks provides employers with the ability to find potential job candidates according to skills, experience and qualifications. It also allows for the posting of job openings and also provides a menu of business incentives available to businesses within the state. The NEworks site also contains job market trend data, education and training programs, human resources information, equal employment opportunity information and a host of other resources. The Nebraska Career Connections site allows employers to build an online business profile; offer extended learning opportunities such as internships, job shadows, and facility tours; post job openings; align with career clusters, pathways, and occupations available in your company, and send messages about the company and affiliated opportunities to registered students and adults.

Employers will also serve as integral partners in the development of sector strategies, and in helping ease the transition to employment for workers. This may include working with Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation and the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired to provide specialized services and supports for qualified employees.

(E) Partner Engagement and Educational Institutions

Nebraska is served by six community colleges serving the central, mid-plains, northeast, southeast, western and metropolitan regions of the state. These institutions are tremendous partners in the workforce development efforts occurring within their respective regions. They provide high-quality and affordable education and training programs; articulate programming

with 4-year colleges; maintain strong relationships with local business to align curriculum to industry standards; coordinate bridge and other programs to increase access; design educational experiences for students; leverage resources; and place students in gainful employment.

Community colleges will continue to be a strong workforce partner throughout the execution of this plan. In addition to those contributions previously cited, the community colleges will be a primary provider of education and training for the sector strategies. Also, as Nebraska's current data integration and enhancement efforts produce more useful data, Nebraska will work with its community colleges to share data that informs the development of new courses, curricular modifications and recruitment efforts.

(F) Partner Engagement with Other Education and Training Providers

Plan partners will initiate a variety of strategies to engage other education providers and eligible training providers within its plan for Nebraska's workforce system. This will specifically include working closely with these entities in implementing career pathways, particularly in H3 and other high-demand industries, and to support the implementation of sector strategies.

(G) Leveraging Resources to Increase Educational Access

A variety of resources are presently available to increase educational access within Nebraska. This includes the services provided through the American Job Centers, Nebraska's P-16 educational system, and through public and private agencies within the state. Several strategies will be implemented to improve coordination between the entities, provide support for their access-focused efforts, and promote education among low-income individuals and other populations who would most benefit from additional educational opportunities. This includes funding and case management provided through the American Job Centers and local VR offices. Pell grants are also available to support students who are low-income. Further, access to education (and targeted programs of study) may be a central component of a sector strategy and work will occur on the local level to identify, promote and distribute resources.

(H) Improving Access to Postsecondary Credentials

Each partnering agency will work closely with their specific clients to determine any educational requirements and to incorporate these into case management. With a special emphasis on H3 jobs (high-wage, high-skill, high-demand), Nebraska understands that improving access to postsecondary credentials is critical to both potential workers seeking long-term employment and to employers seeking trained workers. To this end, the partners will work with their respected partners throughout the state to promote the Career Readiness Standards, offer and promote education and training programs, and, as previously described, coordinate the provision of appropriate services within and across agencies to mitigate any barriers to education and training.

(I) Coordinating with Economic Development Strategies

The programs will work closely with the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, local chambers of commerce, and other economic development agencies to coordinate services and support economic development efforts. This will include the provision of unemployment wage

data, student and skills data and other data sets to determine the availability of skilled workers, which is essential data in recruiting potential businesses and developing local economic development strategies. The effort to coordinate with economic development strategies will continue to entail education and training, using Nebraska's career pathways model. Additionally, as sector strategies are developed at the local area, coordination of these strategies with local economic development will be sought to foster an economic ecosystem around key industries.

(b) State Operating Systems and Policies

(1) State Operating Systems will Support Implementation of Strategies

(A) Operating Systems that Support Coordinated Implementation

The following sections outlines Nebraska current operating systems which will be available to support Nebraska's combined plan for workforce development. As shown, Nebraska has a solid infrastructure that is adequate to support the various reforms described herein and foster the strengthened coordination to occur between the partner programs. Additional systems and system modifications will occur as needed to address challenges and further the work of the partners.

- **NEworks State Data System** In 2010, Nebraska modernized its technology from four separate legacy systems that previously managed information and reported data to a single integrated system that supports Wagner-Peyser, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Trade Assistance Act, Jobs for Veterans Act, and Labor Market Information. NEworks' web-based technology is an integrated system that provides: direct services virtually to job seekers and employers; electronic case management for workforce staff; federal, state, and local reports; staff and community resources; social media capabilities to communicate with job seekers, program participants, and professionals, and the posting of Labor Market Workforce Information for the public. NEworks is used by all program and administrative staff, and it also provides a common registration for all program applicants, electronic case management of participants, communication capabilities with the job seeker and employer customers, and direct access to Labor Market Information. NEworks includes a self-service web-based labor exchange system available to job seekers and employers alike. NEworks is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week and allows for access and use without having the need to interface with Career Center staff. The utilization of NEworks by all partners included in this plan supports the Governor's vision to utilize technology to deliver services as well as to communicate, collaborate, and streamline services across program lines.
- **QE2** is a web-based case management and fiscal reporting system. The application was written in Ruby on Rails, an open source object oriented web framework, with a MySQL backend. End-user authentication utilizes the Nebraska Directory Services (NDS) framework. Development, hosting, and support is provided by Nebraska VR application developers and network administrators.
- **eForce** allows fully accessible client data tracking, entering and reporting.
- **The National Reporting System (NRS)** is an updated accountability system for the federally funded, State-administered adult education program. The Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) required a computerized student data system. The purpose

of the NRS is to have an accountability system for adult education programs by identifying measures for national reporting and their definitions, establishing methodologies for data collection, developing standards for reporting to the U.S. Department of Education, and developing training materials and activities on NRS requirements and procedures. Nebraska's Adult Education data system, the Adult Information Management System (AIMS), is utilized to report required information and data required by the NRS. AIMS was created by the Nebraska Department of Education and is routinely updated to comply with the United States Department of Education guidance and reporting. In addition, enhancements are made to assist local programs in utilizing the data for local program evaluation, improvement, and management.

USES OF NRS DATA

Federal Level:

- To meet agency accountability requirements (GPRA)
- To demonstrate program effectiveness to Congress

State Level:

- To meet state and federal reporting requirements for funding
- As one factor in determining local funding
- To understand local programs and identify technical assistance (TA) needs

Local Level:

- For program improvement efforts
 - For program management – to understand students and classes
- **Labor Market Information System** Nebraska's Labor Market Information System is integrated into the NEworks site and includes a robust menu for gathering and analyzing labor market and economic information. The site hosts a variety of tools for job seekers, employers, economic development professionals, and the general public. While the web is used to deliver the majority of data and Labor Market Information (LMI) staff also provide on-site workshops, training, conferences and presentations across the state on LMI. Nebraska's Core Products and Services Workforce Information Grant staff assist State and Local Workforce Development Board members in reviewing projections to ensure understanding of the data. This training provides information on trends, needs and issues on a local, regional and statewide basis. In addition, there is a regional analyst position that meets statewide with One-stop management and staffs about their LMI needs, and hosts training on how to use LMI in their local areas. This analyst meets with local Chambers of Commerce, economic development committees, and businesses to determine the needs of local businesses, and assist them in understanding the availability and use of labor market information.
 - **H3 (High-Wage, High-Skill, High-Demand) site** utilizes "real time" job posting and job seeker information from NEworks as well as statistical projections to educate end users on labor market trends. This website was built to be "use friendly" for educators, workforce professionals, economic developers, parents, students, job seekers, and other interested parties. H3 data is useful to economic developers and community leaders who wish to fill in-demand occupations as well as educators, students and their parents, and job seekers who are planning career paths. The Nebraska Departments of Labor, Economic Development, and Education collaborated to provide information on

Nebraska's high-wage, high-skill and high-demand occupations. The H3 site was the result of a collaborative effort between the prior WIA 5-Year State Plan, 60 NDOL employment and training programs, Career Technical Education and the Department of Economic Development.

- **Eligible Training Provider List** Nebraska will provide a comprehensive listing of training providers, training programs, and demographic information. Through our NEworks technology, users can access information on education and training providers by city, course of study or by occupational title. Providers also use TrainingLink to submit their Eligible Training Provider applications. Customers are able to access the statewide list of eligible training providers and their performance information. The eligible training provider list will contain at least the following information:
 - a description of each program, including the resulting postsecondary credential(s);
 - program performance information, including rates of unsubsidized employment during the second (2nd) and fourth (4th) quarters after program exit, median quarterly earnings during the second (2nd) quarter after program exit, and credentials attainment;
 - a description of provider partnerships with businesses relating to the program;
 - other information NDOL may require in order to demonstrate high quality training services;
 - how the program aligns with in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and
 - program-specific performance and cost information, including tuition and fees.
- **Electronic Case File System** Nebraska implements electronic case files for all partner programs included in this Plan. This is our continual effort to promote efficiency, achieve quality case files, increase consistent file documentation, and achieve complete program verification and accuracy in federal reporting. The core partners transitioned to electronic case files to document all new program enrollments. NEworks uses an electronic document imaging and storage system called Enterprise Content Management (ECM). To capitalize on the increased efficiency of data storage and retrieval, NDOL revised the documentation process for determining eligibility and the maintenance of pertinent records. For new enrollments, NDOL is no longer dependent on hard copy documentation and uses electronic verification of eligibility requirements. The ECM system includes both internal and external access allowing all servicing partners the means to efficiently provide services for their clients. The NEworks electronic application is now the application of record. The goal of the ECM project is to: reduce staff time accessing hard copy documentation; increase the consistency of file documentation; provide easily accessible single point access for file review; and ensure complete verification for program eligibility. Other benefits include: one source of data for case management; easing storage requirements; federal reporting accuracy; timeliness of input; comprehensive view of participant's record; and data validation. The electronic information referenced will be made available to any USDOL or state auditor, or monitor who needs access in order to carry out their official duties.

(B) Data Collection and Reporting Processes

Nebraska through its combined plan partners will utilize various methods (that are appropriate given the nature, scope and potential utility of the data being collected) to manage the information being generated through Nebraska's workforce system. Primary amongst these approaches will be the integration of data systems for the enhanced facilitation of data sharing amongst the plan partners. The enhanced system interoperability to occur will support the timely analysis necessary to understand the extent of need for workforce development within the state, the impact of the various services being provided, and ongoing program modifications as part of a streamlined and efficient workforce delivery system. In developing and refining data sharing procedures and systems, policies and precautions will be initiated to ensure the integrity of the data as well as the confidentiality of participants.

(1) State Policies will Support the Implementation of Strategies

The State of Nebraska has established policies and procedures to govern the various aspects of workforce development within the state. A brief description for each of these policies is included as follows with the complete policy accessible at www.dol.nebraska.gov under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act section. Additional policies, necessary to support enhanced coordination, will be developed as needed.

- **Accessibility** – ensures equal access to the programs, services and facilities of each American Job Center system location regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, political affiliation or belief, participant status, and against certain non-citizens.
- **Allocation Planning** – establishes the formulas for allocation of WIOA funding to local area and describes the methods by which the NDOL will distribute funds to each local area, recapture funds when necessary, and utilize funding to support administrative and statewide funding to support WIOA-related activities.
- **Administrative Cost Limitations** – provides guidance regarding how administrative funding can be utilized for local workforce area expenditures. Allowable activities and caps associated with the use of administrative funds are outlined.
- **Audits and Audit Resolution** - provides guidance related to audit requirements under WIOA, the Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Part 200), and previous OMB circulars. Provides clarifying definitions so that each local area, grant recipient, subrecipient, one-stop provider, or service provider understand their required roles within the auditing process.
- **Career Planning** – provides information and expected standards to Career Planners relating to the services and resources available for WIOA participants. Guidance is included relating to referrals, assessments, registration, enrollment, eligibility, participation, individual service strategy, supportive services, training decisions, exits, follow-up, and documentation.
- **Cash Management** - ensures local areas properly utilize cash on hand, cash advances, reimbursement methods, working capital, cash depositories, interest, and payments.
- **Co-Enrollment** - provides guidance for coordinating activities between multiple programs and encourages the use of seeking opportunities for co-enrollment that benefit program participants.

- **Conflict of Interest** – outlines circumstances that may present a conflict of interest for a state board or local board member, or the entity or class of officials that the member represents, and identifies procedures to resolve such conflicts.
- **Correction of Record** – outlines timelines, processes, and requirements for corrections of record requests. Information relating to the appropriateness of record corrections is addressed.
- **Criteria for Local Workforce Development Boards** – establishes membership, composition, and other criteria for the operation of the local workforce development boards.
- **Demand Occupations** – provides the definition of “demand occupations” and its impact on services provided at the local level; clarifies the expectations for funding WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker training in Nebraska regarding high-wage, high-skill, high-demand occupations, and occupations at either the state or regional level.
- **Data Validation** – helps ensure to the maximum extent feasible the accuracy of the data entered into the required management information systems. Emphasizes the importance of complete information for program monitoring and improving program results.
- **Designation as a Local Area** – provides guidance and requirements relating to the local area designations under WIOA. Provides a mechanism for local areas to make a formal request for initial designation under WIOA.
- **Designation of Regions** – provides background information relating to the process, activities, and research that have been conducted in an effort to identify WIOA required regions and planning regions in Nebraska.
- **Electronic Case Files** - establishes requirements regarding electronic file storage and documentation imaging standards in the administration of WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, Trade Adjustment Assistance and related assistance programs, National Dislocated Worker Grants, and Work Opportunity Tax Credit under the State’s integrated Management Information System, NEworks and Enterprise Content Management system.
- **Eligibility for Adult Programs** – presents eligibility criteria for the adult programs as defined under the provisions of the WIOA.
- **Eligibility for Dislocated Worker Programs** – presents eligibility criteria for the dislocated worker programs as defined under the provisions of the WIOA.
- **Eligibility for Youth Programs** – presents eligibility criteria for the adult programs as defined under the provisions of the WIOA.
- **Eligible Training Provider** – prescribes eligibility criteria and general conditions that training providers must meet in order to become certified as an eligible provider to receive adult and dislocated worker funds through Individual Training Accounts under WIOA.
- **Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination** - ensures nondiscrimination and equal opportunity, as well as nonparticipation in sectarian activities. Prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, political affiliation or belief, participant status, against certain noncitizens, sex-based

stereotypes (including stereotypes about how persons of a particular sex are expected to look, speak, or act).

- **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)** – provides guidance relating to compliance with FERPA, which protects the privacy of student education records, yet allows schools to disclose those records, with consent, to the specific parties under certain conditions.
- **Grievances or Complaints of a Nondiscriminatory Manner** – establishes procedures for properly handling grievances or complaints alleging violations of the requirements of Title I. Requires local areas to establish their own written procedures for complaints, such procedure shall include an opportunity for a hearing and be completed within 60 days after the filing of the grievance or complaint.
- **Hatch Act** – provides guidance relating to specific political activity restrictions on some individuals paid with federal funds.
- **Incumbent Worker Training Program** – ensures local areas establish policies relating to potential incumbent worker training programs authorized under WIOA. Outlines the requirements to establish such programs, the spending caps in place, and provides a sliding scale for employers (based on number of employees) to determine the required employer cost share of such programs.
- **In-Demand Industries and Occupations** – provides guidance to local areas relating to WIOA provisions addressing the term “in-demand,” and defines “in-demand” as it relates to industries and occupations.
- **Individual Training Accounts** - concerns ITAs established on behalf of participants to be used for the payment of training expenses to eligible training providers using funds from WIOA.
- **Local Area Plan Modifications and Revisions** – relates to modified local plans which will serve as a “transitional” plan during the first two program year of WIOA implementation
- **Monitoring** – establishes the state’s process for monitoring program and fiscal performance at the state and local area levels on a yearly basis to ensure proper systems are in place, being followed, and meet the requirements of the law.
- **Memorandum of Understanding** – this policy is in development and has not yet been released under WIOA. It will provide instructions to the local workforce development boards for developing and entering into a memorandum of understanding with all American Job Centers partners in the operation of the one-stop delivery system in the local area.
- **On-The-Job Training** – establishes minimal requirements for on-the-job training contracts to ensure participants are provided a structured training opportunity in which to gain the knowledge and competencies necessary to be successful in the occupation in which they receive training, and that training services are provided in a manner that maximizes consumer choice in the selection of an eligible provider of such services.
- **Out-of-School Youth Spending** – addresses the WIOA requirement of at least 75% of youth funds (except for local area expenditures for administrative purposes) must be used to provide activities to out-of-school youth.

- **Pell Grants and Other Financial Aid** – enhances collaboration between the workforce development system and financial aid offices will ultimately benefit eligible individuals and their dependents through increased financial aid and improved access to education and training opportunities. Provides guidance relating to the coordination of WIOA funding with Pell Grant and other available resources.
- **Procurement Standards** – provides guidance relating to general procurement administration, changes to service provider contracts under WIOA, developing contracts or agreements, conflict of interest, competition, confidentiality and non-disclosure, copyrights, construction, awarding review, bonding, monitoring of local procurement practices, pay-for-performance contracts, designation and certification of one-stop operators, and youth program competitive selection requirements.
- **Property Management** – provides guidance regarding the use, management, and disposal of equipment acquired under a federal grant in accordance with State and Federal laws and procedures.
- **Rapid Response** – establishes strategies and activities necessary to (i) plan for and quickly respond to announcements of business closures and layoffs and mass job dislocation resulting from natural or other disasters; (ii) deliver services that enable dislocated workers to transition to new employment as quickly as possible; and (iii) address the needs of businesses in transition to prevent or minimize the duration of unemployment.
- **Record Retention** – establishes protocols to keep and maintain records that are sufficient to prepare required reports, meet program record-keeping requirements, and to have the ability to trace funds to a level of expenditure adequate to ensure that the funds have not been spent unlawfully.
- **Request for Local Board Certification** – establishes standards for local boards to submit a request to the Governor to certify one local board for each local area in the state, once every two years.
- **Roles and Responsibilities of Chief Elected Officials** – provides guidance relating to the roles of CEOs within each local area. Identifies the requirement of a CEO agreement, and identifies duties relating to board appointments, grant recipient duties and liabilities, submission of the local plan, coordination of designating and certifying one-stop operators, Memoranda of Understanding, oversight of the one-stop delivery system, and budgeting.
- **Salary and Bonus Limitations** – outlines federal salary and bonus limitations applicable to WIOA funding.
- **Supportive Services** - provides supportive service program guidelines to local areas for WIOA eligible participants.
- **Trade Adjustment Assistance Program under Trade Act of 2002** – provides guidance and establishes criteria for administering benefits and services under the act.
- **Trade Adjustment Assistance Program Under Trade Act of 2011** -- provides guidance and establishes criteria for administering benefits and services under the act.
- **Trade Adjustment Assistance under the Trade and Globalization Adjustment Assistance Act of 2009** – provides guidance and establishes criteria for administering benefits and services under the act.

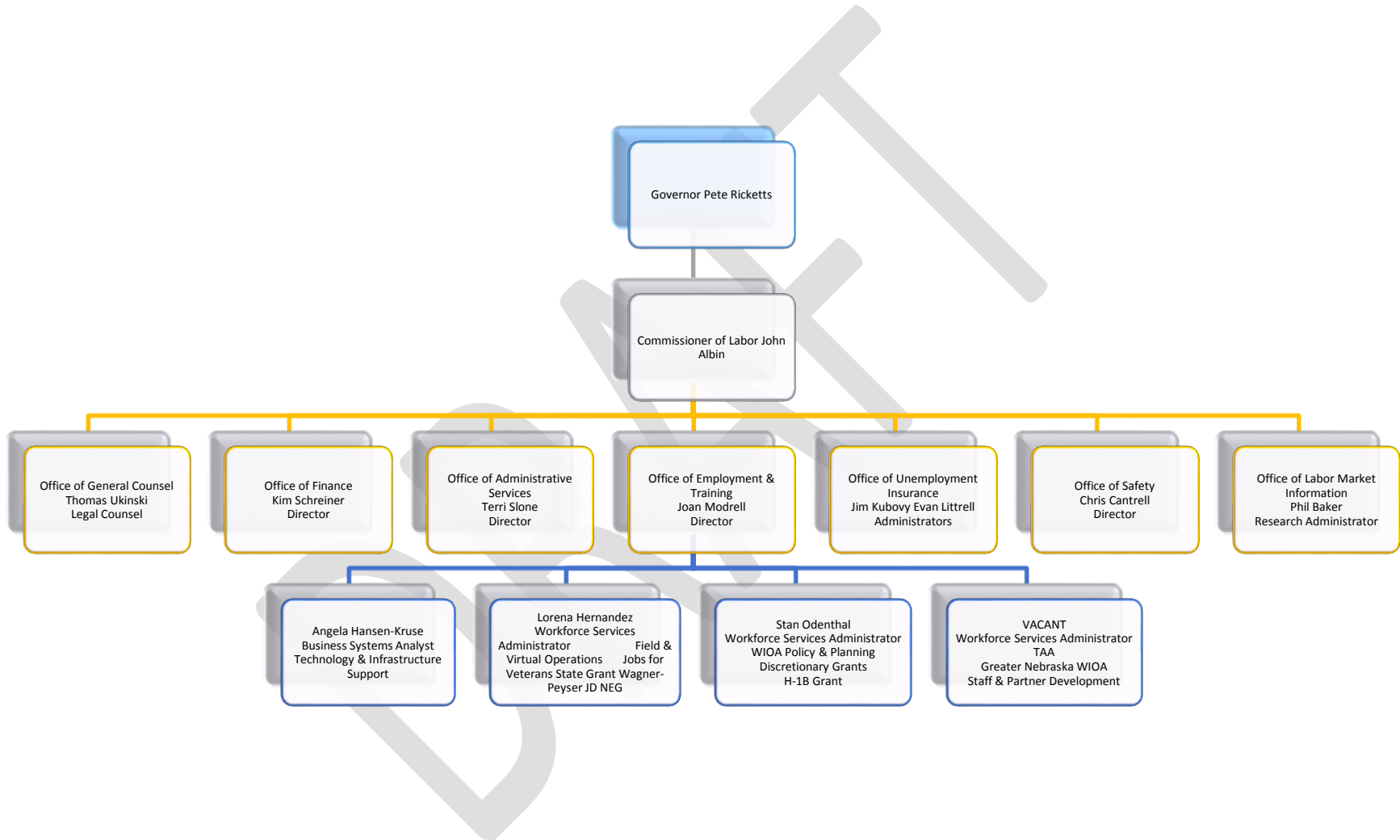
- **Work Experiences for Youth, Adults, and Dislocated Workers** - explains the requirements of the Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker programs to provide work experiences for eligible individuals under WIOA. This policy highlights the 20% work experience spending requirement for Youth under WIOA. Additionally, it provides information about the qualification of providers and describes some of the restrictions on work experiences.
- **Youth Program Design** – defines criteria for the design, elements, and parameters of youth programs.

In developing guidelines for state-administered one-stop partner programs' contributions to a one-stop delivery system, Nebraska will work closely with the American Job Centers within the state to review their contributions to a one-stop delivery system. This will include the establishment of appropriate benchmarks and guidance to guide local efforts around the equitable distribution of funds. A copy of these guidelines will be furnished within the 2018 modification of the state plan.

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(3) State Program and State Board Overview

(A) State Agency Organization



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- Governor Pete Ricketts
 - Commissioner of Labor John Albin
 - Office of General Counsel, Thomas Ukinski, Legal Counsel
 - Office of Finance, Kim Schreiner, Director
 - Office of Administrative Services, Terri Slone, Director
 - Office of Employment & Training, Joan Modrell, Director
 - Angela Hansen-Kruse, Business Systems Analyst, Technology & Infrastructure Support
 - Lorena Hernandez, Workforce Services Administrator, Field & Virtual Operations, Jobs for Veterans State Grant, Wagner-Peyser, JD NEG
 - Stan Odenthal, Workforce Services Administrator, WIOA Policy & Planning, Discretionary Grants, H-1B Grant
 - VACANT, Workforce Services Administrator, TAA, Greater Nebraska WIOA, Staff & Partner Development
 - Office of Unemployment Insurance, Jim Kubovy Evan Littrell, Administrators
 - Office of Safety, Chris Cantrell, Director
 - Office of Labor Market Information, Phil Baker, Research Administrator

(B) State Board

The Nebraska Workforce Development Board (NWDB) is currently comprised of 55 members who reside throughout the state and represent business, labor, community-based organizations, education, higher education, human services, economic development, government and other essential stakeholder groups. A majority of the Nebraska Workforce Development Board members represents business and industry (see enclosed table). The voting membership of the NWDB is composed of 18 business representatives and 16 partner and government representatives. The board rethinks and restructures the way workforce development services are planned and delivered so they meet the needs of both the employer and job seeker customer. The NWDB focuses on strategic planning, policy development and oversight of the local Workforce Investment systems. The NDOL Office of Employment and Training serves as staff support to the NWDB and its committees. The NWDB is well equipped to develop the Governor's vision for a Workforce System. Led by a business majority reflecting the varied business opportunities within the state, the NWDB has immediate access to the information required to make the workforce responsive to the changing needs of business. Board membership has an appropriate distribution of members from metro and non-metro areas of the state. It has the diverse partner expertise necessary to insure the inclusion of all segments of the population. In addition, the board has the policymakers needed to achieve those changes in a timely, meaningful manner.

Nebraska Workforce Development Board – Business Members

| Business – Sec. 101(b)(1)(C)(i) | Company | Location |
|--|------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Tammie Beck | Cabela's | Kearney |
| Brian Deakin | BD Medical | Holdrege |
| Michael Geary | Kiewit Corporation | Omaha |
| James (Jim) Hanson* | InTouch Communications | Omaha |
| Mark Moravec (Chair) | Chief Industries, Inc. | Grand Island |
| Don Nordell | Black Hills Energy | Lincoln |
| Terri Ridder | Franciscan Care Services, Inc. | West Point |
| Bradley (Brad) Schroeder (Vice-Chair) | Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska | Omaha |
| Jennifer Sedlacek | Union Pacific Railroad | Omaha |
| Becky Stitt | Western Sugar Cooperative | Scottsbluff |
| Carol Swigart* | Hillaero Modification Center | Lincoln |
| Lisa Wilson* | Case New Holland Industrial | Grand Island |

Nebraska Workforce Development Board - Other Required Members

| Governor (Sec. 101(b)(1)(A)) | Organization | Location |
|---|--|-----------------|
| Governor Pete Ricketts | State of Nebraska | Lincoln |
| State Senator (Sec. 101(b)(1)(B)) | Organization | Location |
| Senator Health Mello | Nebraska State Legislature | Lincoln |
| Representatives of the Workforce within in State (Sec. 101(b)(1)(C)(ii)) | Organization | Location |
| Bradley (Brad) Bird | Steamfitters and Plumbers Local 464 | Omaha |
| Jason Feldhaus | Nebraska Child and Families Foundation | Lincoln |
| Allan Hale | National Electrical Contractors Assoc. | Omaha |
| Susan (Sue) Martin | Nebraska State AFL-CIO | Omaha |
| Michelle Olson | CHP International Inc./Job Corps | Omaha |
| The Balance – (Sec. 101(b)(1)(C)(iii)) | Organization | Location |
| John Albin | Nebraska Department of Labor | Lincoln |
| Matthew (Matt) Blomstedt | Nebraska Department of Education | Lincoln |
| John Fagot | Mayor of Lexington | Lexington |
| Courtney Phillips | Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services | Lincoln |
| Vern Powers | Mayor of Hastings | Hastings |
| Courtney Dentlinger | Nebraska Department of Economic Development | Lincoln |

(4) Assessment and Evaluation of Programs and One-Stop Partners

(A) Assessment of Core Programs

Assessment of the core programs will be ongoing throughout the implementation of Nebraska's plan in order to meet the minimum performance reporting requirements as described in WIOA Section 116(B). This will entail the collection of key data in order to assess the performance measures established for each program (e.g., employment rate, median earnings, credential rate, measurable skills gains, placement rates, etc.). As described, Nebraska maintains several powerful data reporting systems to assist in the collection and aggregation of these data, specifically NWorks and Nebraska State Longitudinal Data Tracking system.

The aforementioned data will be used to develop annual reports, determine the percent of the negotiated plan achieved, and to compare Nebraska's performance against other states. Assessment will include the goals established by local and regional areas in order to coordinate efforts and outcomes. In keeping also with the reporting requirements, Nebraska the data will be available both in summary and aggregate form to allow for reporting based on the demographic characteristics, population barriers and services provided.

(B) Assessment of One-Stop Partners

Assessment of the one-stop partners has not been conducted previous to the development of this plan. However, Nebraska, under the authority of its Workforce Development Board, will work with its American Job Center partners throughout the state to implement the collection of WIOA performance measures data and to securely transfer the data to the state. Additional metrics may also be identified and incorporated into the one-stop assessment process in order to evaluate workforce development at the local area.

(C) Previous Assessment Results

Assessment of the effectiveness of the core programs, combined plan partners and other one-stop partner programs have not been previously conducted. Performance measure for the core partners will be established (as described in Section 116 of the WIOA) working with the Secretary of Labor in conjunction with the Secretary of Education. This combined plan outlines specific strategies that will be used to assess the effectiveness of these programs and provide the data necessary to track progress toward the negotiated performance goals. The results of these assessments will be provided beginning with the 2018 state plan modification.

(D) Process for Conducting Evaluations and Research Projects Under WIOA Core Programs; conjunction with state and local boards as well as state agencies; and in coordination with evaluations provided by the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education Under WIOA.

Assessments will be aligned with WIOA program performance measures and any agency- or program-specific measures developed for the programs. These assessments will seek to determine the efficacy of the interventions being implemented, with priority given to their impact on populations facing barriers to employment. This may include but is not limited to low-income individuals; individuals with disabilities; ex-offenders; homeless individuals; youth who

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have aged out of the foster care system; English Language Learners; individuals with low levels of literacy; single parents; farmworkers; those within two years of exhausting lifetime TANF eligibility; and the long-term unemployed. Assessment will be coordinated with efforts taking place at the local and regional levels in order to support data collection, data analysis and to foster assessment that furnishes accurate indicators of workforce development within the state. Coordination will also occur to align state evaluations with those provided by the Secretary of Labor or Secretary of Education under WIOA.

(5) Distribution of Funds for Core Programs

(A) Title I Programs: Description of Written Policies for Distribution of Funds for (i) Youth Activities; (ii) Adult and Training Activities; and (iii) Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities

Distribution Timing. Funds for Youth activities for the entire program year are available on or after April 1. For the period between April 1, 2015, and June 30, 2015, WIOA funds are to be used only to serve WIOA youth participants, while Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds may be used during this period to serve youth participants eligible under WIA. On July 1, 2015, all WIA youth participants who are still enrolled in the WIA Youth program must be considered eligible for the WIOA Youth program, even if the participant would not otherwise be eligible for WIOA.

The Adult and Dislocated Worker funds are allotted on both a Program Year (PY) and Fiscal Year (FY) basis.

- Base Funds (PY): The first allotment becomes available for obligation on July 1; this portion is commonly referred to as "base" funds.
- Advance Funds (FY): The second allotment becomes available for obligation on October 1; this portion is commonly referred to as "advance" funds.

Availability of Funds. For the state, funds are available for expenditure during the program year of allotment and the two succeeding program years. For local areas, funds are available for the program year of allocation plus one succeeding program year.

Methods and Factors of Distribution

Adult and Youth Funds

Nebraska will use the standard allocation formulas (below) for distributing the Adult and Youth funds portion to the local areas. The 30 percent discretionary method will not be a part of the process.

In allocating the Adult and Youth funds to local areas, a state may allocate:

- $33\frac{1}{3}\%$ of the funds on the basis of the relative number of unemployed individuals residing in areas of substantial unemployment in each designated area, compared to the total number of unemployed individuals in all such areas of substantial unemployment in the state;

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- 33¹/₃% of the funds on the basis of the relative excess number (note definition above) of unemployed individuals in each designated area, compared to the total excess number of unemployed individuals in all designated areas; and
- 33¹/₃% of the funds on the basis of the relative number of disadvantaged (Youth or Adults), compared to the total number of disadvantaged (Youth or Adults) in the state.

Dislocated Worker Funds. Pursuant to 133(b)(2)(B) of WIOA, the following formula for Dislocated Worker Funds will be instituted beginning with the allocations under Program Year 2015 (July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016).

| Allocated Factor | Current Weight |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| UI | 15% |
| Excess UI | 15% |
| Long Term | 20% |
| Dislocated Workers | 20% |
| Declining Industries | 5% |
| Farmer/Rancher Hardship | 5% |
| Enrollments in DW programs | 20% |
| | 100% |

(B) Title II Programs: (i) How the Agency Will Award Multi-Year Grants; (ii) Ensuring Direct and Equitable Access to All Eligible Providers to Apply and Compete for Funding

The Nebraska Department of Education, under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (Title II) of the Workforce Investment and Opportunity Act, Section 231, will:

- award multi-year grants, on a competitive basis, to eligible providers; and
- ensures that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply for grants by using the same grant announcement and application processes for all eligible providers in the state.

(C) Title IV Programs: Factors Used by the State to Determine the Distribution of Funds

As per longstanding agreement, the federal allotment of total dollars to Nebraska is divided as follows: 15.5% to the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired and 84.5% to Nebraska VR.

(6) Program Data

(A) Data Alignment and Integration including (i) Interoperability of Management Information Systems; (ii) Integration of Data Systems; (iii) Alignment of Technology and Data Systems and (iv) Generation of Required Reports

Enhanced coordination between the partner programs is one of the primary goals of Nebraska's combined state plan, and the attainment of this goal will strongly hinge on the ability of these programs to share a wide swath of workforce-related data in real time. As is the case in many states, the exchange of data in real time is a daunting challenge for workforce development

COMBINED STATE PLAN FOR NEBRASKA'S WORKFORCE SYSTEM

programs given their unique data systems, common intake procedures, security concerns, and privacy laws.

As documented in the goals section of this plan, each of the plan partners is strongly committed to developing the technical reforms (i.e., procedures, policies, systems and safeguards) necessary to meet WIOA data alignment requirements and to support coordinated and streamlined service delivery, ongoing assessment of services, and continuous improvement.

A data integration task force will be established to further explore the feasibility of aligning the data systems from technical, programmatic and legal perspectives. The task force will include representatives from each of the plan partners including those with the requisite technical expertise necessary to understand the architectural potential and adaptability of the agencies' present data systems.

A main focus of this entity initially will include the interoperability of the stakeholders' technology and data systems. This will not only involve the system modifications necessary to support the secure exchange of data but also working with partnering programs to ensure any alignment supports the State's overall goal of strengthened coordination amongst the programs.

Primary amongst the system's desired features is the ability to generate the data required for reports in meeting WIOA Section 1116(b) and to support continuous monitoring of the programs. This will include the ability to produce data on each of the WIOA performance measures and to aggregate this data according to client characteristics, services rendered and other identifiers.

In 2015, Nebraska was awarded its second Workforce Data Quality Initiative Grant through US Department of Labor. The grant seeks to establish a warehouse of workforce data to include NDOL employment and training records, all community college, all state college and one university campus, Adult Basic Education, Carl Perkins and Vocational Rehabilitation records to begin building the database. The data warehouse initiative is designed to produce the information NDOL and its partners need to monitor performance and initiate any programmatic improvements based on the data. To extend the potential impact of this initiative, additional training providers, Registered Apprenticeship and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) will also be invited to participate in the data warehouse initiative.

(B) Assessment of Participants' Post-Program Success in Postsecondary Education and/or Employment

As detailed in the "Performance Goals Matrix" (see Appendix), specific benchmarks will be established by each of the programs (negotiated with the Secretary of Labor in conjunction with the Secretary of Education) to track participants' post-exit outcomes using such indicators as employment, median earnings, credential attainment, measurable skills gains, and other workforce indicators assessed at various intervals post-program exit. In addition to these data, Nebraska will also utilize Nebraska's State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) and its data warehouse (being developed through its Workforce Data Quality Grant Initiative) to collect

relevant data and use the data to determine post-program education and employment outcomes for participants.

Nebraska's SLDS provides the data necessary to improve the quality of Nebraska's workforce. Data elements from each programs' management information system for federal reporting is included in the NELDS. These include WIOA Title I, Wagner-Peyser, TAA, TRA, UI benefit claims and demographic data, UI Tax data, FEDES data, WRIS and WRIS2 data, CTE postsecondary, Adult Basic Education, Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), data for WIOA eligible training provider consumer reports, Vocational Rehabilitation, Registered Apprenticeship and TANF. The NELDS will allow for maintenance of the data over time while keeping within FERPA and WRIS, WRIS2 guidelines and Employment Security laws.

Nebraska's Longitudinal Data System links directly to the Nebraska Department of Education's Student and Staff Record System using the participant's social security number or unique student identification number. This unique identifier provides for the collection of a variety of data such as test scores, teachers, graduation rates and transcripts – all cross-referenced to postsecondary and workforce outcomes. From the specific matching wage records to the programs listed above, program managers and policy makers can determine: whether individuals are employed, what their earnings and industry employment are if they are employed, whether they have been or become unemployed, whether they collect unemployment insurance benefits, what workforce and training services they may have received and what the workforce outcomes are upon completing training services. The data provided here will help assess the effectiveness of Nebraska education and workforce system and also help identify factors that bring people to need these services.

(C) Use of Unemployment Insurance Wage Record Data

NEworks, Nebraska's Management Information System, meets WIOA Title I regulatory and reporting requirements for tracking participants and possesses the functionality to integrate both state and Wage Record Interchange System (WRIS) unemployment insurance data into participant records to allow for federal reporting from a statewide and regional perspective. The partner programs will use the Unemployment Insurance Wage Records generated by NEworks for assessing workforce performance measures as part of an overall strategy to workforce outcomes and refine processes throughout Nebraska's workforce delivery system.

It is also noteworthy that Nebraska is currently one of 39 states, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico participating in the Wage Record Interchange System 2 (WRIS2). WRIS 2 is designed to extend the WRIS data sharing model to required American Job Center partner programs that do not fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of Labor, and it also extends the data sharing model to programs defined by the Act as "additional" partners (i.e., those entities who are not mandatory partners in the American Job Center delivery system but are appropriate given the services provided through their agencies). WRIS 2 is specifically designed to help facilitate the generation of Aggregate Statistical Reports and subsequent analysis in satisfaction of Federal and state reporting and performance requirements. WRIS 2

ensures the availability of data for research and evaluation of workforce programs without compromising personal identifiable information.

(D) Privacy Safeguards

In implementing its combined state plan for workforce development, the State of Nebraska is committed to ensuring the privacy of all its workforce participants. To this end, each of the combined plan partners will adhere to applicable federal, state and local laws including Family Education Right and Privacy Act (FERPA), the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and others. Given the enhanced data sharing to occur, each of the programs will work with its legal counsel to review any interagency agreement that involves the sharing of data, in order to ensure that privacy safeguards are clearly established and understood by each of the programs.

(7) Priority of Service for Veterans

Federal law and regulations require all workforce programs funded by the Department of Labor to provide priority of service to:

1. Veterans who served in the active military, naval, or air service and were discharged under conditions other than dishonorable; and,
2. Eligible spouses of those veterans who have total service-connected disabilities or who died as a result of service-connected disabilities.

Priority of service means that those Veterans and eligible spouses who meet all the eligibility requirements for a program or service are to receive access to that program or service either earlier in time or instead of persons who are not eligible for priority of service.

Veterans are provided priority of service at all Nebraska Career Centers. All veteran job seekers are registered and provided staff assisted services through the Career Center delivery system. Priority of services to veterans is further supported through the use of NEworks, the State Management Information System. NEworks automatically matches qualified applicants to available jobs through job registration and the creation of an online resume. When a job search is run against any job opening, a list of qualified job seekers is created. All eligible veterans are placed at the top of the list.

Career Center staff members then have three available options to notify eligible veterans of available job openings:

- call the veteran individually
- email the veteran
- notify him/her through the "My Workspace" Message Board within NEworks, if the individual is registered on NEworks

All veterans are strongly encouraged to register in NEworks so they can be provided staff-assisted services. This, combined with the NEworks self-service labor exchange system, ensures veterans priority of services in the Wagner-Peyser public labor exchange system. The "Nebraska Disabled

Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP) and Local Veterans' Employment Representative (LVER) Grant Modification Plan" provides information on how all of the Career Centers have fully integrated the Veterans program into their local service delivery system. The main focus for LVER is outreach to employers.

Representatives promote the advantages of hiring veterans to employers and employer groups. After veterans are determined to be job-ready following the receipt of intensive services from a DVOP specialist, it is the role of the LVER staff to then focus on individualized job development. This may be facilitated through the use of employer-focused seminars or, in conjunction with employers, may involve veteran-focused job search workshops, Transition Assistance Program (TAP) workshops, and/or the establishment of job search groups. LVERs advocate for employment and training opportunities for veterans with business and industry and community-based organizations.

Responsibilities may include planning and participation in job fairs to promote veterans, working with unions and apprenticeship programs and promoting credentialing and training opportunities for veterans, monitoring job listings from federal contractors, and ensuring veterans receive priority in referrals to these jobs. DVOP specialists provide intensive services including comprehensive assessment of education, skills, and abilities; in-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals; group and individual career coaching; short-term, pre-vocational services; and development of an individual employment plan that identifies employment goals, interim objectives, and appropriate services that will enable the veteran to meet his or her employment goals. They conduct outreach activities at a variety of sites. DVOPs also serve as case managers for veterans with serious disadvantages for the job market and for veterans enrolled in federally-funded training programs, such as the Department of Veterans Affairs' Vocational Rehabilitation program.

As the state's primary source of staff-assisted and self-service labor exchange services, all of Nebraska's American Job Centers have fully integrated the Veterans program into their local service delivery system. At least one fully qualified DVOP and/or LVER staff member is located in 10 of the 14 Career Centers, and at least one Employment Service staff member [trained and certified in Veterans programs by the National Veterans Training Institute (NVTI)] is located in the remaining 6 Career Centers. In addition, 5 of the 14 Career Centers have been identified as Regional Career Centers with program oversight responsibilities for the Career Centers within their regional boundaries. All 5 Regional Career Centers have fully qualified DVOP and/or LVER staff available to provide program support to Career Centers in their region without full-time Veterans staff. The guidelines for the integration, provision, priority, training, placement, and coordination of staff-assisted core and intensive services as well as referral to other partner training programs for the veteran population is provided through the State Veterans' Plan and local Career Center Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) and Business Plans.

[\(8\) Accessibility of One-Stop Delivery System for individuals with disabilities](#)

Nebraska maintains an Accessibility policy that stresses physical and programmatic accessibility, including the use of accessible technology to increase individuals with disabilities' access to high

quality workforce services. Title I of WIOA assigns responsibilities at the local, State and Federal levels to ensure the creation and maintenance of an American Job Center (AJC) system that enhances the range and quality of workforce development services that are accessible to individuals seeking assistance. It prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, political affiliation or belief, participant status, and against certain non-citizens. Although gender identity is not an explicitly protected basis under the applicable federal laws, discrimination based upon gender identity, gender expression, and sex stereotyping has been interpreted to be a form of prohibited sex discrimination, including under laws that apply to federally financially assisted employment, training, and education programs and activities.

As set forth in the regulations (29 CFR Part 38) implementing Section 188 of WIOA, there is an obligation to assure fair and equitable access to all services, programs and facilities for members of both sexes, various racial and ethnic groups, individuals in differing age groups, and individuals with disabilities. Any entity that receives financial assistance under Title I of WIOA is a recipient obligated to ensure nondiscrimination and equal opportunity. This includes State and Local Workforce Development Boards, AJC operators, service providers, vendors, and subrecipients, as well as other types of individuals and entities. This policy is directed toward ensuring that the programs, services and facilities of each AJC delivery system are accessible to all, including individuals with disabilities.

To ensure that individuals are not subjected to discrimination on the basis of disability, NDOL conducts regular oversight of programs and services. Local boards must assess, on an annual basis, the physical and programmatic accessibility of all AJCs in the local area, in accordance with Sec. 188 of WIOA, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.14.

(9) Accessibility of One-Stop Delivery System for individuals with Limited English Proficiency

Nebraska has established a Limited English Proficiency Plan which ensures that individuals with limited English proficiency are able to access programs and services provided by the American Job Centers and One-Stop Partners on an equitable basis. This plan also addresses the entities that receive Federal financial assistance under Title I of WIOA and programs and activities that are part of Nebraska's one-stop delivery system. Key features of this plan that support access for individuals with limited English proficiency include:

- Establishment of an LEP (limited English proficiency) planning committee to provide guidance and leadership around the equitable provision of services to individuals with limited English proficiency;
- Thorough assessment of the language needs of the populations served by attempting to identify LEP individuals. In order to identify language needs, the LEP committee has reviewed available language data from the U.S. Census American Community Survey and from self-identifying information from NEworks registrants.

COMBINED STATE PLAN FOR NEBRASKA'S WORKFORCE SYSTEM

- Availability of specific resources at each American Job Center or NDOL local office to include bilingual staff, LanguageLine or International Communications translation services, referral to ESL resources and the availability of materials in Spanish.
- Training on serving individuals with LEP needs is conducted by the Office of Employment and Training. The OET's LEP Coordinator, in conjunction with the agency monitor and the Equal Opportunity Officer or designee coordinates, schedules and implements statewide training. LEP training is conducted every two years, with the training materials and topics being coordinated with the EO Officer or designee. Additional training sessions are conducted via LiveMeeting alerting staff to any major changes necessitating alterations to the LEP plan that would directly influence daily activities. Likewise, training materials and tools are shared with staff through meetings and emails as the OET or the LEP committee becomes aware of them.
- The NDOL public website provides information for workers and employers. This includes information about job searching, training, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, and many additional programs and services. The NDOL site is accessible at <http://www.dol.nebraska.gov>. The site features the option of selecting language translation services provided via Google Language Tools. The translation through Google utilizes an automated/computerized translation which serves as an approximation for the site's original content. NDOL has provided a Translation Disclaimer Statement indicating potential issues with the automated translation process. Available languages listed on the NDOL site include: Spanish, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Korean, Russian, Polish, Arabic, Portuguese, Japanese, and Norwegian. The NDOL website provides information on how to contact local field staff for additional assistance.

In addition, English-as-a-Second language instruction is available throughout the state to provide populations with low levels of English literacy with the instruction they need to improve fluency. Referral to providers of ESL education and the provision of transportation and other forms of assistance necessary to access these courses will continue to occur through American Job Centers.

IV. COORDINATION WITH COMBINED STATE PLAN PROGRAMS

Nebraska will be developing a Public Sector Partnership to guide the implementation of the Combined State Plan. The Public Sector Partnership will include the participation of each of the plan partners who will meet regularly to oversee the implementation of the combined plan, assess progress, leverage and align resources, collectively foster improvements in the workforce system, and provide public sector leadership. Functioning as a working committee, the Public Sector Partnership will provide the shared governance, day-to-day coordination and leadership needed to guide enhanced workforce development partnerships among public sector programs.

Nebraska Combined State Plan

July 1, 2016 through June 20, 2018

Introduction

Nebraska's Combined State Plan sets the foundation to develop Nebraska's Workforce System. The State Plan represents the collective planning, resources and vision of ten workforce development programs:

1. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act; Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker programs
2. Wagner-Peyser Act, Employment services program
3. Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program
4. Vocational Rehabilitation program consisting of the Nebraska Vocational Rehabilitation and the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired
5. Unemployment Insurance
6. Jobs for Veterans State Grant
7. Trade Adjustment Assistance Act program
8. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program
9. Senior Community Service Employment Program
10. Career Technical Education

These ten programs are operated by three state agencies; Department of Labor, Department of Education, and the Department of Health and Human Services. The vision and strategies set forth in the Combined State Plan are designed to leverage resources, avoid duplication of services, capitalize on the professional talents of agency staff and create an effective system of services that provides "value add" for the employer and job seeker customer.

How the State Plan is Organized

The major content areas of the Combined Plan include strategic and operational planning elements as well as program-specifics for the ten partner programs.

Strategic Elements

The Strategic Elements section includes analyses of Nebraska's economic conditions, workforce characteristics, and workforce development activities. These analyses drive the required vision and goals for Nebraska's Workforce System and alignment strategies for workforce development programs to support economic growth and coordinating programs and services for target populations.

Operational Planning Elements

The Operational Planning Elements section identifies Nebraska's efforts to support the strategic vision and goals identified in the Strategic Elements section. The Operational Planning Elements section ensures that Nebraska has the necessary infrastructure, policies, and activities to meet its strategic goals, implement its alignment strategy, and support ongoing program development and coordination. Operational planning elements include State Strategy Implementation and State Operating Systems and Policies.

Program-Specific Requirements

The Program-Specific Requirements section describes:

- the designation process for and identifies Nebraska's proposed regions and local areas

- Statewide activities required under WIOA
- the workforce development activities of the core and partner programs

Overview of the State Plan

Strategic Elements: Workforce System Vision, Goals, and Strategies

Vision:

- Dual customer (employers and job seekers) focus of the plan partner programs to:
 - furnish employers with the skilled workforce they desperately need to grow and thrive in a global economy
 - seamlessly administer services to jobseekers at all stages of the employment spectrum
- Strong communication between partnering programs and other workforce development entities in order to streamline services and foster coordinated strategies to meet the needs of the workforce system's primary customers, employers and workers
- Maintaining a strong understanding of employers' specific workforce needs and developing proactive strategies that respond to these needs with timely and targeted interventions
- Collaborative effort where partnering programs leverage the collective resources of the state's workforce partners as a whole
- Ensuring that employers and job seekers within Nebraska are provided with an environment that meets their unique workforce needs

Goals and Supporting Strategies:

Goal 1: Enhanced Coordination between the Plan Partners

Strategies:

1. Development of a common intake across programs
2. Development and alignment of terminology across programs
3. Implement a Public Sector Partnership with Plan Partner agencies and other workforce program stakeholders
4. Coordination of funding streams
5. Technological integration
6. Development of policies to define protocol and provide guidance
7. Collaborative evaluation of systems to ensure continuous improvement
8. Coordination with local and regional areas

Goal 2: Strengthened alignment between education and/or training and industry priority and need

Strategies:

1. Data-driven decision making that targets high-wage, high-skill, and high-demand jobs
2. Create Industry Sector Partnerships at the local and regional levels
3. Addressing skills gaps within the state
4. Continuous improvement in workforce development strategies
5. Expansion of work-based learning opportunities
6. Targeted outreach to disadvantaged workers

Goal 3: Increased Workforce Participation

Strategies:

1. Public and Industry Sector Partnerships will be developed and implemented
2. Promotion of H3 (high skill, high wage, high demand) jobs
3. Targeted distribution of available funding streams
4. Development of Career Pathways
5. Fostered alignment of education, credentialing and placement

6. Acquisition of new funding streams and the leveraging of new resources to enhance services available to those not participating in the workforce
7. Working closely with each region to assess and refine the delivery of services
8. Develop creative partnerships and solutions to employ non-traditional populations

Goal 4: Promote self-sufficiency among low-income and other disadvantaged populations

Strategies:

1. Enhance access to available services
2. Targeted acquisition of funding and other resources
3. Continued development and dissemination of online resources
4. Enhanced data sharing and analysis amongst the plan partners
5. Promote knowledge transfers across partner programs

Economic, Workforce, and Workforce Development Activities Analyses:

Economic Analysis:

- Industry projections across all Nebraska industries show total growth of 9.54% through 2022, including annual growth of .92% and employment increase of 102,252 job openings
- Top H3 occupations in Nebraska as of December 2015:
 1. Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
 2. Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics
 3. Registered Nurses
 4. First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers
 5. Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists
 6. Computer User Support Specialists
 7. Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics
 8. Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters
 9. Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses
 10. Electricians
- 12 primary industry clusters in Nebraska driving economic growth
 1. Agricultural Machinery
 2. Agriculture and Food Processing
 3. Biosciences
 4. Business Management and Administrative Services
 5. Financial Services
 6. Health Services
 7. Hospitality and Tourism
 8. Precision Metals Manufacturing
 9. Renewable Energy
 10. Research, Development and Engineering Services
 11. Software and Computer Services
 12. Transportation, Warehousing, and Transportation Logistics

Workforce Analysis:

- Nebraska's total civilian labor force as of September 2015 is 997,841 of which 971,682 are employed equating to an unemployment rate of 2.6%
- 1/3 of Nebraskans looking for work are likely underemployed or working multiple low-wage jobs
- 312,737 potential jobseekers within the Omaha and Lincoln areas
- 96% of Nebraska workers are willing to commute 15 minutes or more each way for suitable employment
- 52% of Nebraska employers experienced difficulties in hiring qualified employees over the past 12-month period

- 54.1% of Nebraskans 62-69 years of age participate in the labor force, a higher percentage than the national rate of 43.6%
- 5.2% of Nebraskans in the labor force have a disability
- 11.5% on Nebraska's unemployed have a disability
- 1 in 4 of Nebraskans without a high school diploma live in poverty
- National median annual wage for a person with less than a high school diploma is \$21,898
- Median annual wage across all industries in Nebraska is \$33,180
- Median wage sought by potential jobseekers in Nebraska is \$41,600 annually
- A single parent living in Omaha with a preschooler needs at least \$16.39 per hour to make ends meet
- Nebraska's workforce is expected to expand by 9.93% from 2012 to 2022, with a projected increase of 100,340 wage and salary jobs
- By 2022, nearly 35% of the state's projected annual openings will require education beyond high school
- Percentage of Nebraskans among race groups without a high school education
 - Asian (24.9%)
 - Native American (24.2%)
 - Black (15.1%)
- Native American students drop out at a rate of 38.4%, black students at a rate of 27.9%, Hispanic students at 22.1%, white students at 7.4%, and Asian/Pacific Islanders at 6.6%
- 10.6% of Nebraskans speak a language other than English at home

Workforce Development Analysis:

Plan partners seek to ensure a comprehensive network of interrelated services addressing a wide spectrum of jobseeker and employer needs through seven major service areas:

1. Assessment
2. Classroom Training and Instruction
3. Education
4. Credentialing/Certification
5. Supportive Services
6. Employment Services
7. Business Services

Plan partners have established and maintain a robust network of services as part of the workforce development strategy, of which there are strengths and weaknesses:

- Key strengths
 - NENetworks (Nebraska's Management Information System)
 - Comprehensive range of high-quality workforce development services
 - Cost-efficiency in the delivery of services
 - Strong partnerships between plan partners
 - Strong technology infrastructure
- Key Weaknesses
 - Widespread dispersion of various populations within the state
 - Limited industry sector involvement in the workforce system
 - Need to strengthen communication between workforce development program partners
 - Absence of a common intake form
 - Common terminology for key workforce development terms
 - Lack of utilizing our strong technology infrastructure across programs and agencies

Operational Planning Elements: State Strategy Implementation

State Board Functions. Nebraska Workforce Development Board is responsible for maintaining a dynamic, demand-driven workforce system focusing on high-wage, high-skill, and high-demand industries within a regional development context. This includes the integration of services to employers and job seekers by a network of public and private partners. The board also works to:

- meet the changing long and short term needs of businesses and individuals with a coordinated, efficient, and less bureaucratic delivery system
- provide all Nebraska residents with the knowledge, skills and resources for learning, earning, and living in the state

Implementation of State Strategy. Plan partners will implement the state's strategies identified above through:

- Core program activities
- Alignment with activities outside the State Plan
- Coordination, alignment and provision of services to individuals and employers
- Partner engagement with educational institutions and other education and training providers
- Leveraging resources to increase educational access
- Improving access to postsecondary credentials
- Coordinating with economic development strategies

Operational Planning Elements: State Operating Systems and Policies

This section of the State Plan describes the state operating systems and policies that support the implementation of the state strategies described above:

- Operating systems
 - NEworks State Data System
 - Labor Market Information System
 - H3 (High-Wage, High-Skill, High-Demand)
 - Eligible Training Provider List
 - Electronic Case File System
 - Data collection and reporting process
- Policies
 - The State of Nebraska has established policies and procedures to govern the various aspects of workforce development within the state, accessible on the Nebraska Department of Labor [WIOA Policy page](#).

This section of the State Plan also describes:

- State agency organizational structure
- Nebraska Workforce Development Board structure, membership, and activities
- Assessment of core programs and one-stop program partners
- Distribution of funds for core programs
- Program data
- Priority of service for Veterans
- Accessibility of the one-stop delivery system for individuals with disabilities and individuals with limited English proficiency

Program-Specific Requirements for Core Programs

This section of the State plan describes the designation process for and identifies Nebraska's regions and local workforce development areas. Nebraska is proposing an intrastate regional structure that includes three (3) regions to potentially be designated by the Governor:

1. Metro Region – covers Dodge, Douglas, Cass, Sarpy, Saunders, and Washington Counties, with Douglas County being the target area of economic concentration. Preliminary contact has been made with the state of Iowa to explore the possibility of a future expansion of the Metro Region to include Iowa counties that are economically tied to the Metro Region;
2. Southeast Region – covers Fillmore, Gage, Jefferson, Johnson, Lancaster, Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, Richardson, Saline, Seward, Thayer, and York Counties, with Lancaster County being the target area of economic concentration;
3. Greater Nebraska Region – covers the remaining 74 counties in Nebraska

In addition to these regions, the Governor has designated three local workforce development areas. These local area boundaries remain the same as under WIA:

1. Greater Omaha Local Workforce Development Area, serving Douglas, Sarpy, and Washington counties
2. Greater Lincoln Local Workforce Development Area, serving Lancaster and Saunders counties
3. Greater Nebraska Local Workforce Development Area, serving the remaining 88 Nebraska counties

Motion to Recommend Approval of the Combined State Plan to the Governor

**February 12, 2016 Meeting of the
Nebraska Workforce Development Board (NWDB)**

Recommendation for Approval of Combined State Plan, Agenda Item 5(b)

Background: Sections 102 and 103 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) (29 U.S.C. 3112 and 3113) require a State Governor to submit a Unified or Combined State Plan for approval every four years in order to receive funds under the core workforce development programs. Nebraska's plan meets the partner requirements for a Combined State Plan. Modifications to these plans must be submitted at least every two years. The Combined State Plan requirements are designed to improve service integration and ensure that the State's publicly-funded workforce system helps all jobseekers obtain the skills needed to secure good jobs while providing employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy.

Nebraska's Combined State Plan describes how the State will develop and implement a unified, integrated service delivery system among ten plan partners. The draft of Nebraska's Combined State Plan is currently in a 30 day comment period, which is set to end on February 18, 2016. The Combined State Plan must be submitted to the federal government by April 1, 2016.

It is proposed that the Nebraska Workforce Development Board recommend approval of the Combined State Plan to the Governor.

The State recommends approval of the motion.



Academics • Employability Skills • High School Graduation • Work-Based Learning • Postsecondary Education • Career

JOBS *for* AMERICA'S GRADUATES

A Special Briefing for:

Nebraska Workforce Investment Board

February 2016





Jobs for America's Graduates— Delivering on: Graduation • Jobs • College Attainment

Throughout 35 years of service, JAG has served more than one-million students. JAG students make up the nation's most challenged youth across 32 states, and through the assistance of JAG, achieve high outcomes in three categories:

- **90%+ graduation rates** and **80%+ success rates** 12 months after graduation in securing jobs, college enrollment, or a combination.
- **Doubling** the rate of employment for this at-risk population and **tripling** the rate of full-time employment.
- **Boosting college access and completions** for high-risk populations – almost all first generation.

Jobs for America's Graduates addresses the key national issues of:

- Achieving the Common Core and College and Career-Ready Standards while dramatically cutting the dropout rate.
- Highest unemployment category in the nation and highest rate of unemployment for teenagers in American history.
- Achieving both expanded access **and** college completions for first-generation college students.



Employment Impact of JAG

- America is experiencing the highest unemployment rate among 16-24 year olds in history.
- Over the past 30 years, employment rates of teenagers have dropped from 70% to 45%.
- For the most at-risk and disadvantaged populations, the rate is **26%**; for African American youth seeking full-time employment, it is **7%**.
- Impact of JAG: In the summer of 2012, the Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University reported that JAG has one of the highest impacts of improving employment of any program assessed in the past 35 years of CLMS work, including:
 - Doubling employment for the highest-risk, disadvantaged, and minority populations.
 - Tripling the full-time rate of employment for highest-risk, disadvantaged, and minority populations.



Performance Goals and Outcomes Class of 2014

| Performance | Goals | Actual Outcomes |
|---------------------------|-------|-----------------|
| Graduation Rate | 90% | 93% |
| Positive Outcomes Rate | 80% | 80% |
| Aggregate Employment Rate | 60% | 59% |
| Full-time Jobs Rate | 60% | 72% |
| Full-time Placement Rate | 80% | 89% |
| Further Education Rate | 35% | 43% |

JAG Documents Extraordinary and Consistent Results—Annually!

**After a full 12 months of follow-up services*



JAG Board of Directors

☑ Chaired by Governors – Largest number of Governors to serve on any board (10) other than National Governors Association.

☑ Previous JAG Board Members appointed to President Obama’s Cabinet:

- Janet Napolitano, Secretary of Homeland Security
- Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture
- Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education

Napolitano & Vilsack both served as JAG Chairs when they were Governors.

☑ **Bipartisan Board**

- 5 Republican, 4 Democratic Governors and 1 Independent Governor serve on the JAG Board.

☑ **Senior Education Leaders**

- CEO of American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
- State Superintendents of Alabama, South Dakota, and Washington State

☑ **Senior Business Leaders from:**

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------|------------------|
| • ADM | • Entergy | • JPMorgan Chase |
| • Ally | • G.E. | • McDonald’s |
| • AT&T | • HCA | • Microsoft |
| • Business Roundtable | • IBM | • Shell |



Board of Directors



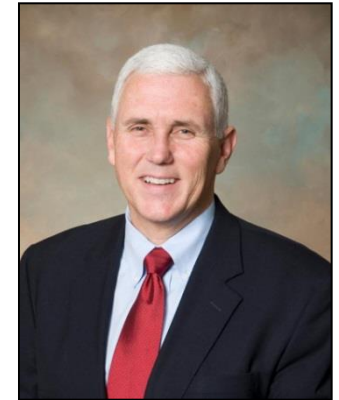
**Governor Phil Bryant (MS)
Chairman**



**Governor
Steve Bullock (MT)
Vice Chair**



**Governor
Jay Nixon (MO)
Vice Chair**



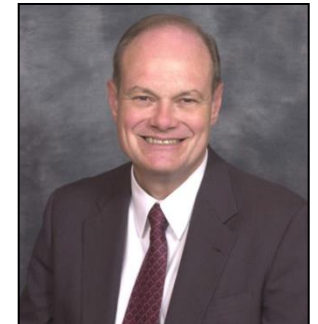
**Governor
Mike Pence (IN)
Vice Chair**



**Carolyn Warner
Treasurer**



**China Gorman
Secretary**



**Tom Tauke
Chair
Executive Committee**



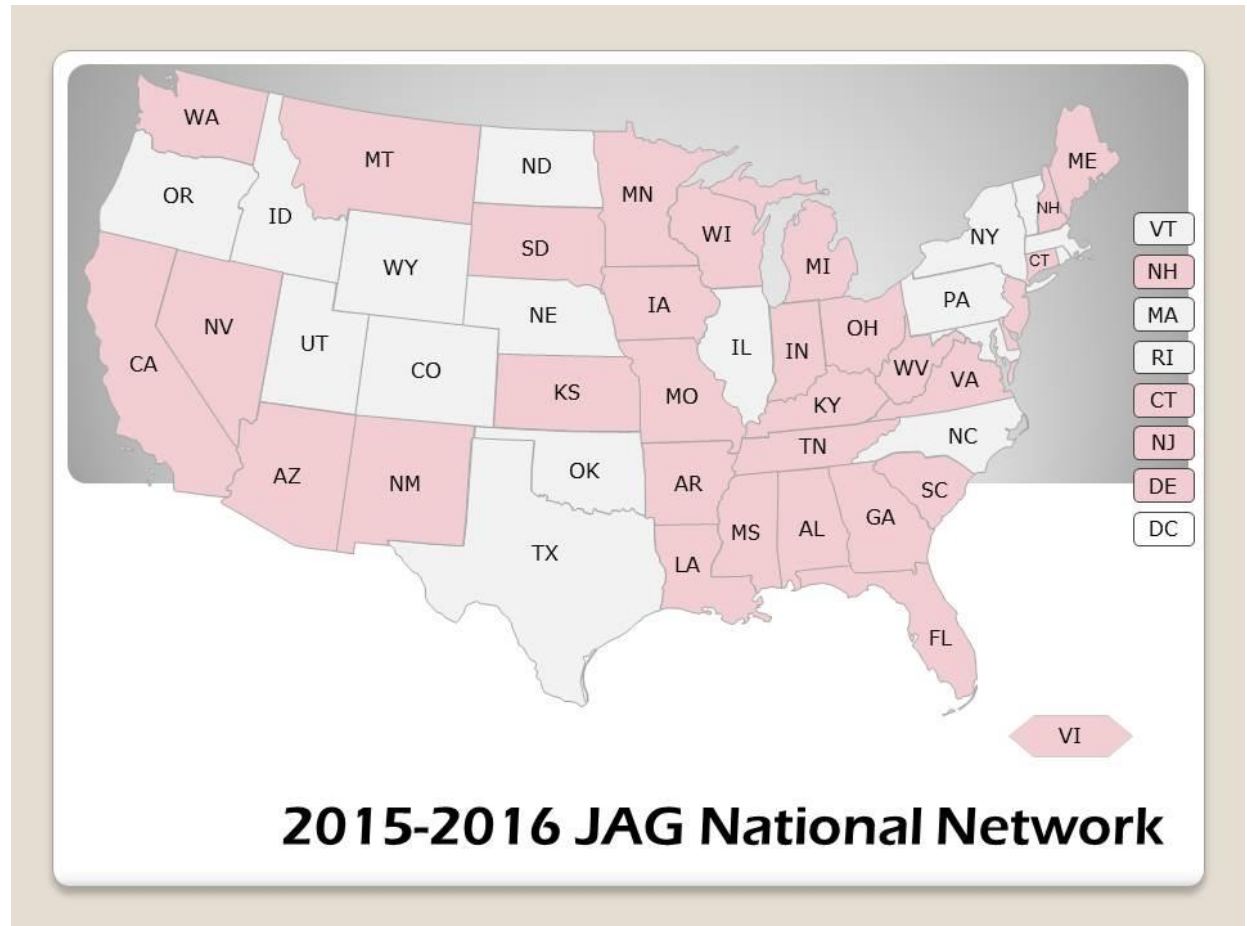
JAG Corporate and Organizational Supporters





JAG National Network 2015-2016

- 1979 1. Delaware (*The First State*)
- 1981 2. Arizona
- 1986 3. Tennessee
- 1987 4. Ohio
- 5. Georgia
- 6. New Hampshire
- 7. Maine
- 1988 8. California
- 1989 9. Mississippi
- 1990 10. Montana
- 11. Kentucky
- 1993 12. Alabama
- 1996 13. Arkansas
- 14. Louisiana
- 1997 15. Virginia
- 1998 16. West Virginia
- 17. Florida
- 18. Wisconsin
- 1999 19. Iowa
- 2003 20. New Mexico
- 21. Missouri
- 2004 22. South Carolina
- 2005 23. Indiana
- 2006 24. Michigan
- 2008 25. South Dakota
- 2009 26. U.S. Virgin Islands
- 2010 27. Washington
- 2011 28. New Jersey
- 2012 29. Nevada
- 2013 30. Kansas
- 2014 31. Connecticut
- 2015 32. Minnesota





JAG State Organizations

State Agency-Led

4 Dept. of Education
3 Dept. of Labor
2 Dept. of Workforce Dev.
1 Dept. of Employment & Workforce

Alabama (ED)
Arkansas (WD)
Georgia (LA)
Indiana (LA)
Kentucky (ED)
Louisiana (ED)
Montana (LA)
New Mexico (ED)
South Carolina (CO)
South Dakota (ED)
Tennessee (ED)
Virgin Islands (LA)

Non-Profit Corporations

20 Non-Profit Corporations

Arizona
California
Connecticut
Delaware
Florida
Iowa
Kansas
Kentucky
Maine
Mississippi
Missouri
Nevada
New Hampshire
New Jersey
Ohio
Tennessee
Virginia
Washington State
West Virginia
Wisconsin



JAG Model in the Schools

- **Engagement with Senior Leaders:** Governors, Chief State School Officers, Business Leaders, Community Leaders
- **Specialists deployed in the schools**—accountable for 35-45 students.
- **Contact**—one class period a day minimum; 36 weeks plus summer.
- **JAG National Curriculum**—37 to 86 Employability Competencies.
- **JAG Career Association**—develop, practice, and refine employability, leadership, and teaming skills.
- **Service-learning, community-based projects.**
- **Field trips, guest speakers, job shadowing, mentors, tutors.**
- **Employer marketing and job development.**
- **Goals:** Graduation, Employment, and Higher Education.



U.S. Chamber of Commerce Survey Findings

- A random sample survey of employers of JAG graduates were asked by the Chamber to rate their perceptions of JAG workers and the JAG program.
- To quote the Chamber: *“The results portray a highly successful program that enjoys considerable success and one that is valued among JAG employers. Both the JAG program and the worker consistently received high rankings throughout the survey.”*
- An overwhelming majority of supervisors (98%) are “Very Likely” or “Somewhat Likely” to employ other JAG graduates.
- Only 3% of the JAG workers did not meet supervisors’ expectations.



JAG and WIOA Both:

- **Shared goals:**
 - Retention and graduation.
 - Employment.
 - Demand 12 months of follow-up.
 - Want measurable outcomes: meeting Youth Performance Measures.
 - Support services to enable youth to stay in school and succeed on the job and in higher education.
 - JAG has a proven Out of School Program Model Application which can help WIBs meet the 75% WIOA rule



Partnerships with WIBs

- JAG Affiliates employ staff and deploy them in the schools or adult learning facilities.
- Assure accountability to attain bottom-line employability/graduation goals.
- Conduct effective visibility & informational campaign.
- Research, engage, and support employer's needs and refine JAG curricula for effective employees.



JAG — A Proven Solution!

1. Keeping those youth who are at risk of not graduating in school—**96%**!
2. Achieving a remarkable **graduation** rate—**93%**
3. **Extraordinary impact on employment** for all JAG graduates, particularly low-income, disadvantaged, and minority youth—**doubling** the rate they secure jobs and **tripling** the rate they secure full-time jobs!
4. Encouraging graduates to pursue a **postsecondary education**—**43%**



Jobs for America's Graduates, Inc.

1729 King Street, Suite 100 • Alexandria, VA 22314-2720

Tel. 703.684.9479 • Fax. 703.684.8400

www.jag.org

Governor Bryant (MS), Chairman of the Board

Governor Steve Bullock (MT), Vice Chair of the Board

Governor Mike Pence (IN), Vice Chair of the Board

Kenneth M. Smith, President

Jim Koening, Ph.D., Executive Vice President

Janelle Duray, Vice President