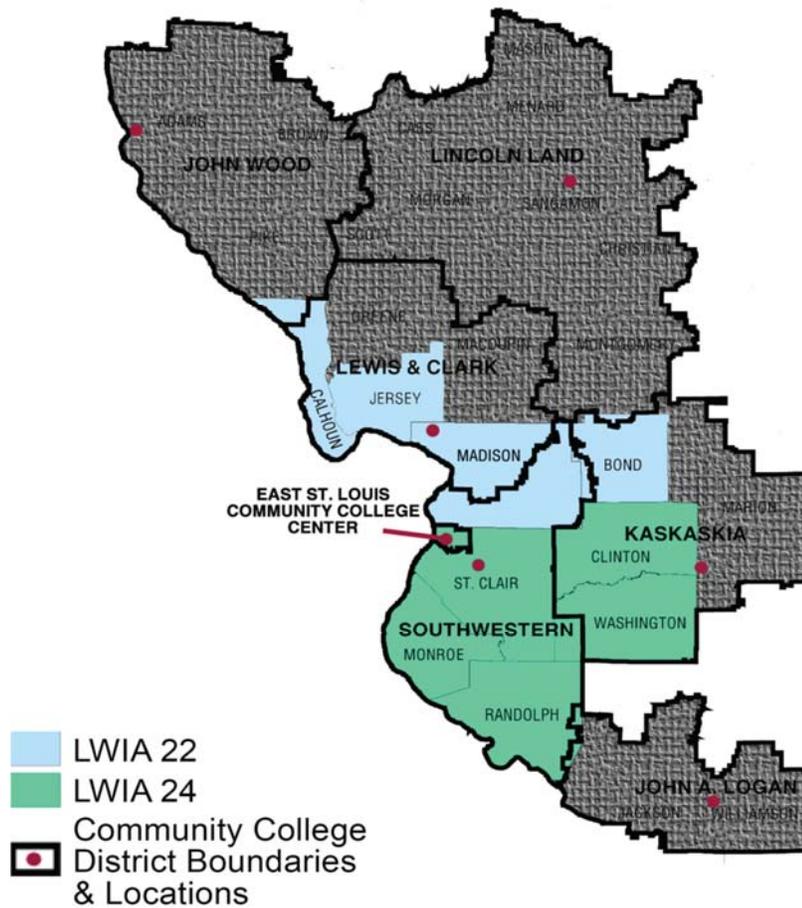


Southwestern Illinois

Region 9

WIOA Plan

PY 2020 - PY 2024



March 2020

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CHAPTER 1: ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS – REGIONAL COMPONENT

This chapter must discuss how the region has collected and analyzed regional labor market information including the local planning requirements. Additionally, the chapter must demonstrate alignment with education and economic development. Regional teams are encouraged to use the labor market information posted on <https://www.illinoisworknet.com/WIOA/RegPlanning> that will provide consistency in the data used for regional analysis throughout the state.

A. Provide an analysis of the:

1. Economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations (§ 679.560(a)(1)(i));

a. What are the targeted industries, high-impact industry clusters, and in-demand occupations in the region?

The targeted industries in the region are Transportation & Warehousing and Health Care & Social Assistance. The top high impact industry cluster is Utilities-Manufacturing-Transportation & Warehousing. In-demand occupations are Truck Drivers, RNs, Warehouse jobs, Riverboat positions and Virtual Technology. Transportation & Warehousing and Utilities are the sectors with the most highly concentrated employment in this region. Transportation & Warehousing is expected to create significant employment growth over the projection period as well. These industries/sectors/occupations fall in line with the State Unified Plan and the DCEO Regional Economic Development Plan.

Region 9's Madison County is leading the nation in warehouse and logistics activity. A recent study report identified the economic impact of warehousing and logistics on Madison County. Combined, the Gateway Commerce Center, Lakeview Commerce Park, and the Northgate Industrial Park have an annual economic impact of over \$1.3 billion in Madison County. These logistic centers generate around 10,000 jobs and almost \$445 million in wages. Nearly 4% of all employment in Madison County is attributable to the warehousing and storage industry, which is 5.4 times more than the national level. Employment in these industries has increased six-fold since 2001, while total wages paid has similarly increased seven-fold. Between 2012 and 2045, the Greater STL area's multimodal freight activity is projected to increase by 74%. the Gateway Commerce Center, Lakeview Commerce Park, and the Northgate Industrial Park still have potential to further expand and develop the Madison County area. The Gateway Commerce Center also has over 2,300 acres of developable space. In 2016 the Gateway Commerce Center introduced a new Amazon fulfillment center with over 750,000 sq. ft. of space. The Lakeview Commerce Center is second largest in regards to acreage and employment. Lakeview has well over 750 acres, with still 350 acres underdeveloped. In recent years, Lakeview, completed a \$1.5

million infrastructure update. Northgate Industrial Park’s largest tenants include Gateway Packaging, Chestnut Health Systems and Heidtman Steel Products. Northgate currently provides 700 acres of developable real estate.

On January 23, 2020, Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker announced the release of \$10,537,000 in planning funds to create preliminary designs for a Health Science Building (HSB) on the Southern Illinois University Edwardsville campus. The complex will include approximately 221,000 square feet. The project’s total cost is approximately \$105 million. The HSB will provide modern classrooms, teaching and research laboratories, faculty offices, administrative spaces, and student resource and study spaces. Students from the southern Illinois region and beyond will be able to attend school at SIUE in a new, modern facility. Specifically, the goal of attracting more SIUE nursing students to address the shortage of RNs and advanced practice providers in the rural southern Illinois region will be realized.

b. What industries and occupations have favorable location quotients?

Based on data on the following table, the industries/sectors with the most favorable location quotients are: **Utilities 1.92; Transportation and Warehousing 1.79; & Agriculture 1.46.**

SOUTHWEST REGION					
EMPLOYMENT BY MAJOR INDUSTRY CATEGORY					
NAICS Title	2016 Employment	Projected 2026 Employment	Net Employment Change 2016-2026	Percent Employment Change	Concentration (Location Quotient)
TOTAL, ALL INDUSTRIES	270,590	286,487	15,897	5.9%	
Self Employed Workers	14,333	14,584	251	1.8%	0.96
Agricultural Production	5,685	5,740	55	1.0%	1.46
Natural Resources & Mining	442	441	(1)	-0.2%	0.38
Construction	11,995	14,068	2,073	17.3%	0.98
Manufacturing	22,348	20,011	(2,337)	-10.5%	1.05
Wholesale Trade	9,411	10,951	1,540	16.4%	0.96
Retail Trade	31,904	32,735	831	2.6%	1.20
Utilities	1,787	1,886	99	5.5%	1.92
Transportation & Warehousing	16,319	19,273	2,954	18.1%	1.79
Information	2,254	1,985	(269)	-11.9%	0.47
Financial Activities	9,585	9,612	27	0.3%	0.67
Professional & Business Services	21,046	22,970	1,924	9.1%	0.60
Educational Services	25,483	26,346	863	3.4%	*
Health Care & Social Assistance	35,478	38,712	3,234	9.1%	1.06
Leisure & Hospitality	29,367	33,605	4,238	14.4%	1.07
Other Services	12,267	12,550	283	2.3%	1.10
Government	20,886	21,018	132	0.6%	*

Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security

Top Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities Occupations:

Warehousing and Storage, Utilities, Truck Transportation, Transit and Ground Transportation, Support Activities for Transportation, Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods, Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods and Water Transportation.

Source: Occupation Employment Projections, IDES

Top Agriculture Occupations:

Agricultural Workers, Agricultural Inspectors, Agricultural Equipment Operators and Crop Production.

Source: Occupation Employment Projections, IDES

c. What industries and occupations have favorable demand projections based on growth?

The table on the previous page, Southwest Region, Employment by Major Industry Category, indicates the most favorable demand projections for industry based on growth are **Construction**, with a 17.3% employment change, **Transportation & Warehousing**, with a 18.1% employment change and **Wholesale Trade**, with a 16.4% employment change.

Following are the occupations with the most annual job openings by education attainment level.

Associate's Degree Occupation	Average	Hourly Wages			Skills
	Annual Job Openings	Entry	Experienced		
Registered Nurses	380	\$23.02	\$34.75	Active Listening, Social Perceptiveness, Service Orientation	
Computer User Support Specialists	67	\$15.11	\$30.92	Active Listening, Speaking, Reading Comprehension	
Paralegals & Legal Assistants	58	\$19.39	\$29.67	Reading Comprehension, Active Listening, Speaking	
Computer Occupations, All Other	44	\$30.16	\$48.40	Critical Thinking, Reading Comprehension, Active Listening	
Physical Therapist Assistants	36	\$20.99	\$28.91	Active Listening, Monitoring, Social Perceptiveness	
Computer Network Support Specialists	25	\$20.81	\$33.28	Critical Thinking, Active Listening, Judgement/Decision Making	
Dental Hygienists	24	\$21.78	\$31.34	Speaking, Active Listening, Critical Thinking	
Medical Records/Health Information Techs	21	\$11.76	\$21.26	Reading Comprehension, Active Listening, Critical Thinking	
Engineering Techs, Ex. Drafters, All Other	19	\$25.72	\$37.02	Active Listening, Critical Thinking, Reading Comprehension	
Occupational Therapist Assistants	19	\$17.24	\$28.83	Active Listening, Speaking, Reading Comprehension	

Postsecondary Vocational Award Occupation	Average	Hourly Wages			Skills
	Annual Job Openings	Entry	Experienced		
Nursing Assistants	371	\$10.90	\$14.01	Service Orientation, Active Listening, Social Perceptiveness	
Automotive Service Techs/Mechanics	184	\$13.35	\$24.99	Equipment Maintenance, Repairing, Troubleshooting	
Hairdressers/Hairstylists/Cosmetologists	141	\$8.93	\$15.14	Active Listening, Speaking, Service Orientation	
Fitness Trainers & Aerobics Instructors	124	\$9.18	\$17.73	Instructing, Service Orientation, Social Perceptiveness	
Preschool Teachers, Ex. Special Education	110	\$10.01	\$14.91	Speaking, Learning Strategies, Instructing	
Licensed Practical & Vocational Nurses	82	\$18.15	\$23.79	Service Orientation, Active Listening, Coordination	
Medical Secretaries	72	\$12.20	\$17.39	Speaking, Active Listening, Service Orientation	
Bus/Truck/Diesel Engine Mechanics	52	\$16.48	\$26.22	Repairing, Troubleshooting, Operation & Control	
Library Technicians	39	\$10.27	\$16.45	Reading Comprehension, Speaking, Active Listening	
Emergency Medical Techs & Paramedics	37	\$9.17	\$15.36	Critical Thinking, Active Listening, Coordination	

Long-Term On-the-Job Training Occupation	Average		Hourly Wages		Skills
	Annual Job Openings	Entry	Experienced	Skills	
Cooks, Restaurant	390	\$9.86	\$13.34	Coordination, Monitoring, Active Listening	
Maintenance & Repair Workers, General	247	\$11.06	\$23.65	Equipment Maintenance, Repairing, Troubleshooting	
Carpenters	211	\$13.84	\$33.65	Active Listening, Monitoring, Speaking	
Electricians	135	\$25.38	\$43.27	Troubleshooting, Repairing, Active Listening	
Machinists	115	\$15.56	\$24.95	Operation Monitoring, Critical Thinking, Operation & Control	
Plumbers, Pipefitters & Steamfitters	111	\$22.71	\$43.13	Active Listening, Critical Thinking, Judgement/Decision Making	
Police & Sheriff's Patrol Officers	101	\$17.29	\$34.69	Active Listening, Critical Thinking, Speaking	
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	59	\$19.22	\$29.67	Equipment Maintenance, Repairing, Operation Monitoring	
Welders, Cutters, Solderers & Brazers	59	\$16.17	\$22.27	Critical Thinking, Operation & Control, Reading Comprehension	
Bakers	56	\$9.07	\$12.77	Monitoring, Active Learning, Active Listening	

Moderate-Term On-the-Job Training Occupation	Average		Hourly Wages		Skills
	Annual Job Openings	Entry	Experienced	Skills	
Customer Service Representatives	526	\$10.58	\$17.80	Active Listening, Speaking, Service Orientation	
Truck Drivers, Heavy & Tractor-Trailer	463	\$17.22	\$26.62	Operation & Control, Operation Monitoring, Time Management	
Secretaries, Ex. Legal/Medical/Executive	326	\$11.39	\$19.54	Writing, Active Listening, Reading Comprehension	
Sales Reps/Wholesale/Mfg, Ex. Tech/Scientific	282	\$13.47	\$29.33	Active Listening, Speaking, Persuasion	
Construction Laborers	278	\$13.53	\$27.70	Active Listening, Coordination, Operation Monitoring	
Bookkeeping/Accounting/Auditing Clerks	231	\$11.79	\$21.50	Active Listening, Reading Comprehension, Speaking	
Production Workers, All Other	166	\$12.51	\$19.30	Operation & Control, Active Listening, Monitoring	
Sales Representatives, Services, All Other	158	\$10.99	\$36.96	Critical Thinking, Reading Comprehension, Active Listening	
Correctional Officers & Jailers	121	\$23.13	\$32.60	Social Perceptiveness, Speaking, Active Listening	
Cooks, Institution & Cafeteria	110	\$9.50	\$13.74	Time Management, Monitoring, Judgement/Decision Making	

Short-Term On-the-Job Training Occupation	Average		Hourly Wages		Skills
	Annual Job Openings	Entry	Experienced	Skills	
Combined Food Prep. & Serving Workers Cashiers	1676	\$8.92	\$9.98	Active Listening, Service Orientation, Speaking	
Retail Salespersons Waiters & Waitresses	1381	\$9.10	\$11.42	Active Listening, Service Orientation, Speaking	
Laborers/Freight/Stock & Material Movers Stock Clerks & Order Fillers	1323	\$9.86	\$16.80	Active Listening, Persuasion, Speaking	
Office Clerks, General	1005	\$8.95	\$12.23	Active Listening, Service Orientation, Social Perceptiveness	
Janitors/Cleaners, Ex. Maids/Housekeepers Personal & Home Care Aides	895	\$11.13	\$17.72	Coordination, Critical Thinking, Operation & Control	
Food Preparation Workers	671	\$10.33	\$17.54	Speaking, Active Listening, Social Orientation	
	627	\$9.77	\$18.18	Active Listening, Reading Comprehension, Speaking	
	486	\$10.21	\$15.97	Active Listening, Coordination, Critical Thinking	
	357	\$10.02	\$11.79	Service Orientation, Social Perceptiveness, Active Listening	
	349	\$9.12	\$11.61	Active Listening, Monitoring, Speaking	

Source: Annual Openings - IL Department of Employment Security - Economic Development Region Occupational Projections 2016-2026

Wage Data - IL Department of Employment Security - Occupational Employment Statistics!! Skills - Top 3 skills from ONet!!

d. What industries and occupations have favorable demand projections based on replacements?

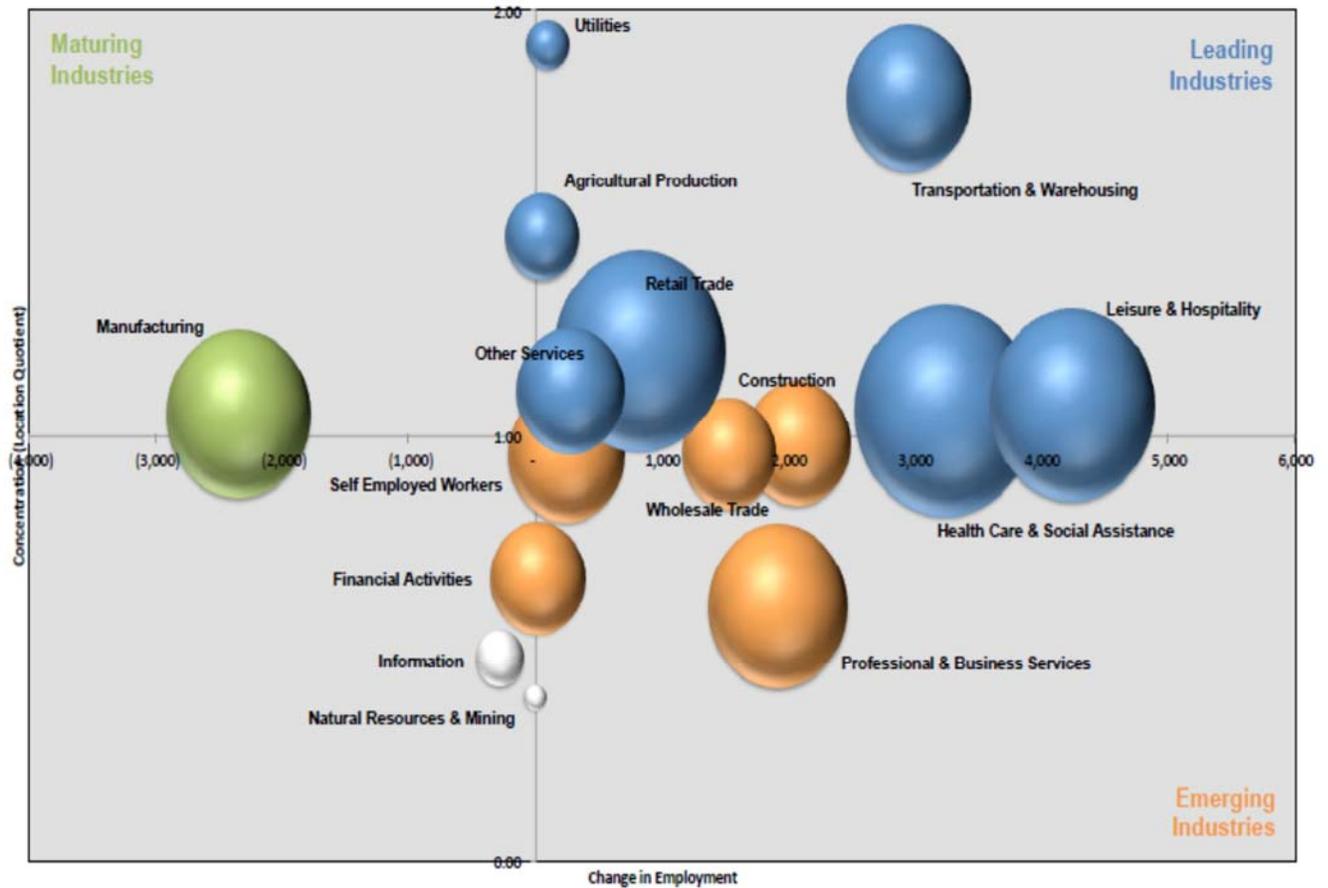
Below are industries and occupations that have favorable demand projections based on replacements, either by exit or transfer. Information was gathered from *IDES Occupational Employment Projections (Long-term) 2016-2016*.

Manufacturing-Steel Workers	Retail Salespersons
Farmers, Ranchers & Other Ag Workers	Sales Reps/Wholesale/Manufacturing Ex.
Computer Occupations	Tech/Scientific
Counselors & Social Workers/Specialists	Bookkeeping/Accounting/Auditing Clerks
Postsecondary Teachers	Customer Service Representatives
Elementary School Teachers, Ex. Special Ed.	Receptionists and Information Clerks
Teacher Assistants	Stock Clerks & Order Fillers
Health Diagnosing & Treating Practitioners	Secretaries and Adm Assts., Ex.
Registered Nurses	Legal/Medical/Ex
Health Technologists & Technicians	Office Clerks, General
Home Health Aides	Carpenters
Nursing Assistants	Construction Laborers
Cooks, Restaurant	Automotive Service Techs/Mechanics
Combined Food Prep & Serving Workers	Maintenance & Repair Workers, General
Waiters & Waitresses	Production Team Assemblers
Janitors/Cleaners, Ex. Maids/Housekeepers	Production Workers, All Others
Child Care Workers	Bus Drivers, School or Special Client
Personal Care Aides	Truck Drivers, Heavy & Tractor-Trailer
1 st -Line Supervisors/Managers Retail Sales	Truck Drivers, Light or Delivery Services
Cashiers	Laborers/Freight/Stock & Material Movers
	Packers & Packagers, Hand

e. What industries and occupations are considered mature but still important to the economy?

As shown in the bubble chart below, **Manufacturing** is the maturing industry but still important to the regional economy. Currently, one of the largest manufacturing products in Region 9 is steel, employing well over 2,000 workers. In 2018, U.S. Steel brought back 800 jobs to the Granite City Works steel mill after tariffs on important steel were enacted by President Donald J. Trump. Alton Steel (ASI) employees 250 workers and, in 2019, 54 full-time salaried employees bought the company. Other manufacturing companies in Region 9 include Olin Brass, Cope Plastics, Hanley Industries, Basler Electric, Mayco Industries, PTL Manufacturing, Terra Source Global, International Paper, Empire Comfort Systems, Chelar Tool and Die and Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals-Greenville,

EMPLOYMENT BY MAJOR INDUSTRY CATEGORY IN THE SOUTHWEST REGION



Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security, Maturing, Leading and Emerging Industries

f. What industries and occupations are considered emerging in the regional economy?

Viewing the bubble chart from the previous section, Construction, Professional and Business Services and Wholesale Trade are considered emerging in the region. Evidence is most prominent by considering the Interstate 255-270-Rt 111 warehousing industries that continues to grow and prosper.

g. What sources of supply and demand data were used to determine the targeted industries, occupations and skills?

Sources of supply and demand data used to determine the targeted industries, occupations and skills were the following: Annual Openings, Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES); Economic Development Region Occupational Projections 2016-2026; Wage Data, IDES Occupational Employment Statistics and Skills-Top 3 Skills from O*Net.

2. Employment needs of employers in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations (§ 679.560(a)(1)(ii));

The current workforce needs highly skilled employees. Work-based learning solutions, such as apprenticeships provide employers the opportunity to train workers to the employer's exact need. Employers are expressing concerns about the turnover with the current workforce.

Apprenticeships are an excellent tool for retention. Apprenticeship studies show that apprenticeships feel a sense of loyalty to a company that invests in their education and training.

The two leading organizations representing EDR 9, St. Clair County Intergovernmental Grants Department- Workforce Development Group and Madison County Employment & Training, currently administer the WIOA grants as well as an existing Apprenticeship Expansion Grant. Both entities, as county departments, have been able to utilize the local government support and existing resources to effectively serve businesses throughout the region. This has enabled not only the administration of WIOA business services, but also the county (and state) incentives vital to not only retain businesses, but to help them thrive and expand. In addition, both organizations have led the formation and growth of the Regional Business Services Team. This team is dedicated to providing business services across EDR 9 and has grown to incorporate a Regional Apprenticeship Navigator, and the focus on work-based learning, including registered apprenticeships. All of this has led to strong relationships within our regional business community, which in turn has led to business "buy-in" and participation when it comes to projects such as the Apprenticeship Expansion Grant.

Under our existing Apprenticeship Expansion Grant, we were able to provide registered apprenticeship programs for Medical Assistant and Manufacturing Process Operators. To date, the EDR 9 Consortium has placed 14 total apprentices into the programs under an incumbent worker model for Medical Assistant and a WIOA eligible new hire model for Process Operations. The 14 apprentices were handpicked by the employers of record and all were within a harder to serve population. The partnering organizations for these apprenticeship programs include St. Clair County Intergovernmental Grants Department -Workforce Development Group, Madison County Employment & Training, Lewis and Clark Community College, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville - National Corn to Ethanol Research Center and SIHF Healthcare. For the Medical Assistant apprenticeship program, an Incumbent Worker Training model was adapted originally for SIHF Healthcare and is the approach chosen by our current interested medical/healthcare organizations. At this time, these organizations include BJC Healthcare, HSHS Medical Group and Gateway Regional Medical Center. This creative way of "growing their own" allows the company to address their need for medical assistants while also choosing their best suited candidates while also creating a backfill opportunity to fill more entry level positions. For the Process Operations apprenticeship program, SIUE - National Corn to Ethanol Research Center will hire WIOA eligible participants and will serve as the employer of record while also make other employment opportunities available to participants upon successful completion of the apprenticeship training.

It is proposed that new apprentice intermediaries will be formally registered and supported while newer start up apprenticeship programs and apprentices will be developed and managed in the areas of Diesel Mechanics, Auto Truck and Trailer Repair, Industrial Manufacturing Technology, Aviation and Welding as well as other possible high and medium growth sector initiatives. In addition, there will be collaboration between the intermediaries and long-term talent pipeline initiatives involving the development of a high school vocational school as well as the Big Step Construction Trades Development Model. The goal is to serve up to 21 registered apprentices under this approach. this grant will target the sectors of Healthcare, Manufacturing, Information & Technology and Transportation Distribution & Logistics. Some of our target occupations are Aviation Maintenance Technicians, Avionics Maintenance Technicians, Industrial Maintenance Technicians, Diesel and Auto Mechanics and Welders.

3. Knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations (§ 679.560(a)(2));

a. What are the targeted career pathway clusters in the region?

The targeted career pathway clusters are Manufacturing and Healthcare. The Career Pathway occupations within Manufacturing vary. One pathway is Welder to CNC Operator to Industrial Maintenance Technician. Another Career Pathway under Manufacturing is Case Picker to Forklift Operator to Safety Manager to Warehouse Manager. Another Career Pathway under Manufacturing could be Production Line Worker to Team Lead to Shift Lead to Training Department to Inner Management. A Career Pathway for Healthcare could be Housekeeping to Certified Nursing Assistant to Certified Medical Assistant to Nurse.

An example of an Industrial Technology career pathway that has been developed with Vandalia High School is as follows: Vandalia High dual credit classes, KC Foundation After School Program and KC Jumpstart Program to Kaskaskia College industrial technology classes to Enter employment as a maintenance technician, engineering technician, installer or industrial sales and service technician OR Transfer pathway to a 2 + 2 university agreement as SIUC.

Lewis and Clark Community College's Adult Education division offers opportunities for those without a high school diploma or GED as well as for those who struggle with reading or math through Career Pathways programs. These programs put students on a pathway to a career. Depending on the career pathway, many options allow students to earn college credit while obtaining their GEDs. L&C offers these exceptional programs to help accelerate students' opportunities for getting their GEDs and move right into whatever training is required to access their chosen career path. Students attend Access Academy – a 12-hour (one week) orientation course – where they learn about themselves, their career interests, and the training they will need to get there. From there they enter Pathway Readiness – a 36-hour (three weeks) course where

they learn how to navigate the next steps on their pathway. They will learn strategies such as: staying motivated, budgeting, time and stress management, and will develop their specific training/college schedules. They will then attend training/college with the support of Pathway Advocates who will be their personal navigator as they move through their pathway. Some pathways like Truck Driver training take as little as twelve weeks while other could lead to an Associate's or even a Bachelor's degree. When students are ready, they will receive help finding work.

b. What are the skills that are in demand in the region?

The skills are related to the occupations respectively. The encompassing skills are the Essential Employability Skills, such as time management, critical thinking, team working ability, etc.

Virtual Technology: The Regional Apprenticeship Navigator is working with SWIC to roll out a 16-week, 4 credit hour Certificate course on Drone Operations. The skillset will transfer to any occupation that will use remote control via video skills. America's Central Port is building a Virtual Facility that will use these skills to remote operate machinery, such as cranes, forklifts, etc. on the port property.

And of course, soft skills are skills in demand in the region, as explained under the next question.

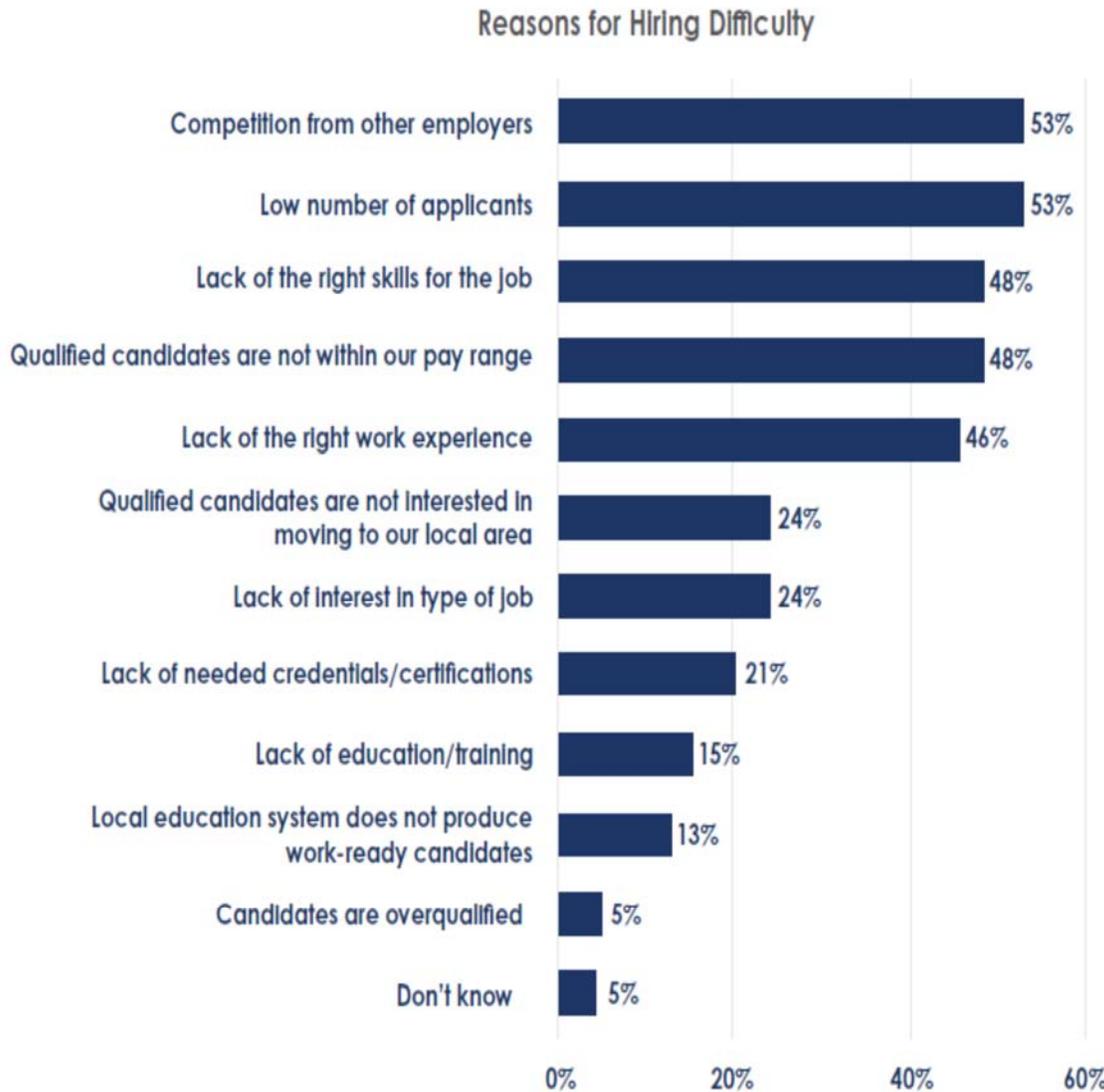
c. How well do the existing skills of job seekers match the demands of local businesses?

At its core, 260 responses from the St. Louis Regional business community on the *Bridging the Talent Gap Employer Community Report*, conducted by the St Louis Regional Chamber and the Graduate Network, provides an honest and objective window into the viewpoints of employers in the St. Louis -Metro East Area. This report provides context — by summarizing how our region has responded — and focus — by revealing our community's specific perspective on key issues concerning hiring challenges, skill gaps among the local labor pool, and the roles education and learning play in helping to address these issues to achieve community goals.

One of the main reasons respondents experience difficulty in hiring is lack of the right skills for the job (**48%**). Support for learning was mixed across respondents, but **80%** of respondents reported that their organization does not provide education benefits, such as financial support for learning/training or on-the-job training, at this time. **65%** of respondents indicated that they did not currently work with a local education provider to assess skill gaps that can be addressed through educational institutions' program offerings and curricula. And **80%** of respondents who do not currently partner with education institutions either definitely or would possibly consider doing so. Across all skills, respondents reported that **49%** of high school diploma holders in their labor pool possessed the skills needed for their jobs. This figure was **60%** for technical/community college graduates and **72%** for four-year college graduates.

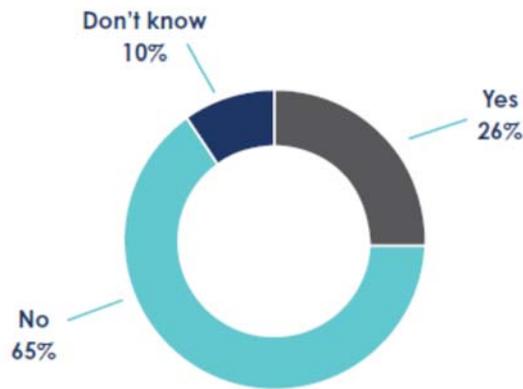
These results are visually shown in the two charts that follow.

The main reasons organizations in your community had difficulty in hiring qualified candidates for full-time regular positions is shown in the chart below. The most often mentioned reasons include competition from other employers, low numbers of applicants, and lack of the right skills for the job.



NOTE: Total percentages are greater than 100% because respondents could choose multiple categories

Does your organization work with local education and training providers to help them assess local skills gaps that can be addressed through their program offerings and curricula? (percent of total responses)



Would your organization consider partnering with a local post-secondary institution or other learning provider to support education, learning, or training for your employees? (Among those not currently partnering)



Soft skills are an important aspect to consider in this discussion. Our regional employers voice over and over that soft skills are actually essential skills, and are seriously missing in current job candidates and workers. To address this topic, the soft skills video *Building Blocks for Success-Your Choices, Your Career, Your Future*, was created with WIOA funding. This production was presented through a partnership with Madison County Employment and Training Department (Title 1B-LWIA #22) and The Chamber of Commerce of Southwestern Madison County.

Short presentations were given on the following soft skills by the following employers:

- Interviewing- Glik Stores
- Punctuality-U.S. Steel Corporation
- Self-Confidence-Cope Plastics
- Communication- Phillips 66

Adaptability- Icon Mechanical Construction
Multicultural Sensitivity- Gateway Regional Medical Center
Creativity- Jack Schmitt Chevrolet
Organization- Gateway Motorsports Park
Critical Thinking-America's Central Port District
Teamwork- Ameren Illinois
Education- SIUE
Personal Decisions- Big Sports Properties

The video was presented in March 2019 to the National Association of Workforce Boards in Washington, D.C., and it has been made available to all Workforce Boards throughout the United States. In addition, the video was shared on the US Chamber of Commerce website and has been shared with businesses, local chambers, and educational institutions. On January 14, 2020, the St. Louis Regional Chamber of Commerce announced that Madison County Employment and Training is a finalist in the Workforce and Talent Development category of the 2020 Arcus Awards, which honors organizations who are paving the way for sustainable changes in workforce and talent development in the region. Winners in seven categories will be named during the 7th Arcus Awards Ceremony on Thursday, Feb. 27, from 5 to 9 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency at the Arch in St. Louis.

4. Regional workforce considering current labor force employment and unemployment data, information on labor market trends, and educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment⁵ (§ 679.510(a)(1)(iv) and § 679.560(a)(3)).

a. How is the region changing in terms of demographics, labor supply and occupational demand?

The Southwestern EDR consists of nine (9) counties: Bond, Calhoun, Clinton, Jersey, Madison, Monroe, Randolph, St. Clair and Washington. The total population of the region has declined from 704,091 in April 2010 to 686,874 in July 2018, showing an overall decrease of 17,217 residents during this 8-year period. Every county, with the exception of Monroe County, decreased in population. Monroe County increased its population by 1,378 people. The two largest populated counties, Madison and St. Clair, consume the majority of the regional population, each making up approximately 38% of the region. The table below represents the population changes for each of the nine counties of Region 9.

Populations Changes for Each of the Counties of Region 9

County	April 2010 Population	July 2018 Population	Difference from 2010-2018	% of EDR Population in 2018
Bond	17,768	16,630	- 1,138	2.4%
Calhoun	5,089	4,802	- 287	0.7%
Clinton	37,762	37,639	- 123	5.5%
Jersey	22,985	21,847	- 1,138	3.2%
Madison	269,282	264,461	- 4,821	38%
Monroe	32,957	34,335	+ 1,378	5%
Randolph	33,476	32,106	- 1,370	4.7%
St Clair	270,056	261,059	- 8,997	38%
Washington	14,716	13,995	- 721	2%
Total Population	704,091	686,874	-17,217	

*Source: Annual Estimates of the Population for Counties of IL, April 1, 2010-July 1, 2018,
U.S. Census Bureau*

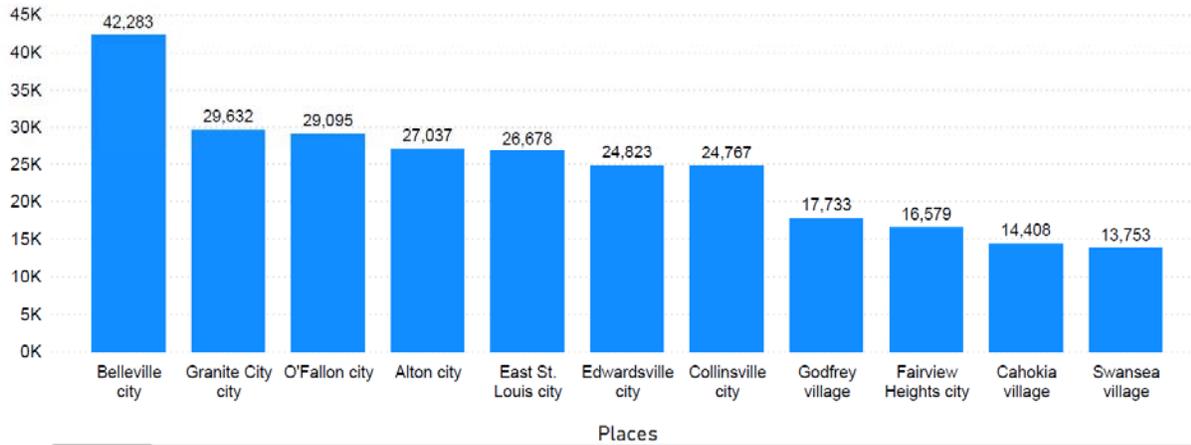
The largest cities also fall within the Madison and St. Clair counties area, and support the majority of the population in the two-county area.

Population by Largest Cities in Region

Southwestern

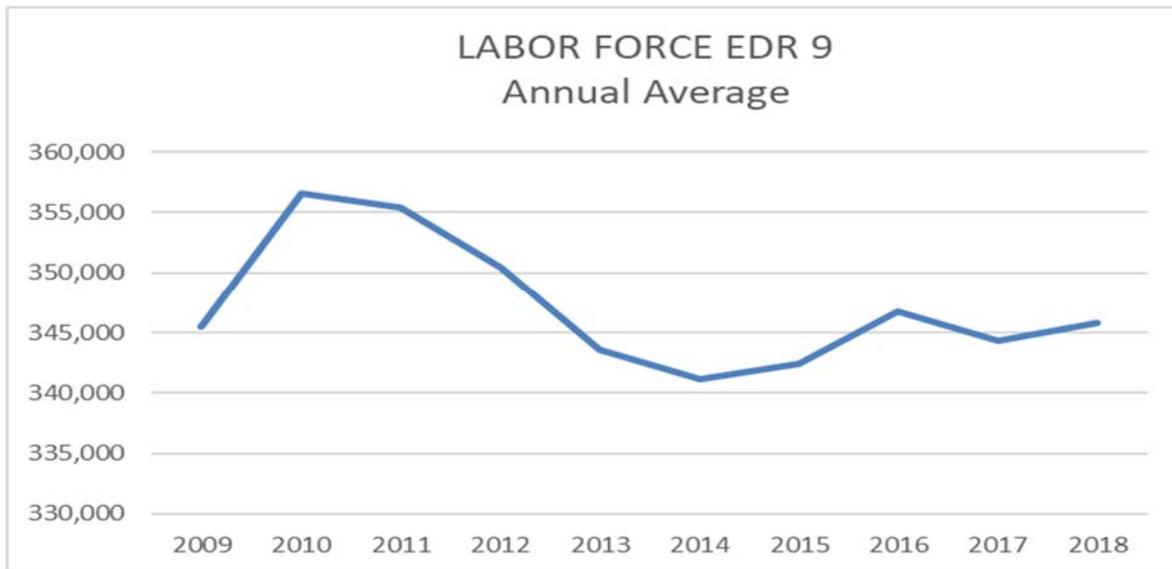
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Statewide, Illinois has a current population of 12.8 million people (4% of the U.S. population). The population of Illinois has declined each year for the past five years. Compared to 2013, the decrease in the state's population reached 1.2% in 2018.



Source: American Community Survey, 2017 and U.S. Census allocation factors from the Missouri Census Data Center Geographic Correspondence Engine

Viewing the chart below, the labor force in the Southwestern EDR had some rises and dips the past 9 years but has similar numbers in 2009 and 2018, 345,462 workers in 2009 to 345,843 in 2018.



Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security

A final consideration is the analysis of employment projections ahead to the year 2026. The chart below demonstrates that occupational demand is predicted to rise in EDR 9 for the majority of industries, and decline for only three industries; natural resources and mining, manufacturing, and the information industry. However, occupations in the manufacturing industry sector continue to show a sizable demand, with only a 10.5% decrease. Retention efforts continue to protect the region's historic manufacturing identity, and changes in the manufacturing sector include more highly technical occupations.

SOUTHWEST REGION				
EMPLOYMENT BY MAJOR INDUSTRY CATEGORY				
NAICS Title	2016 Employment	Projected 2026 Employment	Net Employment Change 2016-2026	Percent Employment Change
TOTAL, ALL INDUSTRIES	270,590	286,487	15,897	5.9%
Self Employed Workers	14,333	14,584	251	1.8%
Agricultural Production	5,685	5,740	55	1.0%
Natural Resources & Mining	442	441	(1)	-0.2%
Construction	11,995	14,068	2,073	17.3%
Manufacturing	22,348	20,011	(2,337)	-10.5%
Wholesale Trade	9,411	10,951	1,540	16.4%
Retail Trade	31,904	32,735	831	2.6%
Utilities	1,787	1,886	99	5.5%
Transportation & Warehousing	16,319	19,273	2,954	18.1%
Information	2,254	1,985	(269)	-11.9%
Financial Activities	9,585	9,612	27	0.3%
Professional & Business Services	21,046	22,970	1,924	9.1%
Educational Services	25,483	26,346	863	3.4%
Health Care & Social Assistance	35,478	38,712	3,234	9.1%
Leisure & Hospitality	29,367	33,605	4,238	14.4%
Other Services	12,267	12,550	283	2.3%
Government	20,886	21,018	132	0.6%

Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security-Employment Projections

b. What special populations exist in the region, what is their magnitude, and what are the policy and service implications to meet the needs of these individuals?

Some of the special populations present in the Southwestern Region are reflected in the information below, provided in the EDR 9 data by the Illinois Department of Commerce, Office of Employment & Training.

ADDITIONAL TARGET POPULATION STATISTICS

EDR 9 Southwestern (Bond, Calhoun, Clinton, Jersey, Madison, Monroe, Randolph, St. Clair, & Washington)

Low-Income Indicators:

• TANF Cases Monthly Average 2017	2,119
• TANF Persons Monthly Average 2017	5,502
• SNAP Households Monthly Average 2018	47,654
• SNAP Persons Monthly Average 2018	93,188

Disability Indicators:

• DHS/DVR Vocational Rehabilitation Program FY2019	
○ Served Age Less Than Age 25	1,040
○ Plan Status Less Than Age 25	231
○ Successful Employment Less Than 25	137
○ Served Age 25 and Over	1,040
○ Plan Status Age 25 and Over	231
○ Successful Employment Age 25 and Over	137
Total number of people with disabilities in Region 9	88,566

DOC Indicators:

• Adult Prison Population (Committing County)	2,373
• Adult Parolee Population (Residing County)	1,120
• Juvenile Justice Detention Admissions	703

Other Indicators:

• Migrant/Seasonal Farm Workers (WIOA Eligible)	27
• Single Parents	
○ Male Householder, No Wife Present	8,120
○ Female Householder, No Husband Present	25,974
• Adult Population at Risk	
○ Age 16 and Over w/out a HS Diploma	44,099
○ Immigrants	3,863

▪ Adults age 65 and older in Region 9 (2018)	116,583
▪ Total number of unemployed (2018 average) in Region 9	15,801
▪ Average UI rate in 2018	4.6%
▪ Total number of veterans in the region in 2018	59,709

An average of 5,502 individuals received TANF each month in 2017 and an average of 93,188 individuals received SNAP benefits each month in 2018. All partners are working hard to tackle the overwhelming challenges that poverty brings to the region.

WIOA Title 1B provides work-based learning through paid work experience, assistance with job search and resume writing, and referrals to other resources.

Community Colleges provide education and help with financial assistance through PELL, MAP, Perkins support and other need-based scholarships, as well as adult education for qualifying adult learners.

DRS works with customer to help them enter competitive, integrated employment. DRS also provides referrals for customers to facilities and agencies that provide assistance for people living in poverty. Resources include but are not limited to employment and training services, referrals to homeless shelters, food pantries, crisis centers, warming/cooling centers, etc.

IDES provides the Illinois Career Information System to customers at job centers and area community colleges for students enrolled in adult basic education. Within the CIS is the Career Plan, which is a self-directed planning guide for adults facing barriers. Career Plan is structured to address issues before they occur, with self-generated tools on how to plan, pay for and persevere when difficulties arise, including preparing for the step involved in achieving goals. Supportive career specialists and college instructors provide encouragement and assist with learning how to use the system independently. IDES offers training and administrative support on the Career Information System through online web-based sessions tailored to customer needs.

There are 88,566 people with disabilities. All partners work with people with disabilities.

WIOA Title 1B provides adult and dislocated worker training programs, work-based learning thru paid work experience, apprenticeships, incumbent worker training and on-the-job training. In addition, Career Centers help with job search, resume assistance, and makes referrals to other resources as needed. The MCETD contracts with one youth provider, MERS/Missouri Goodwill Industries, that offers two youth programs, one in Madison County and one in Bond County, and they specialize in serving young people with disabilities.

DRS provides assistance for people with disabilities through vocational rehabilitation, continuing to focus on employment opportunities that include on the job training and education, work experience and training service, as well as job placement, supported employment, job coaching and job retention services. Transition services and work experience services are provided to youth while in, and when leaving, school. In FY 2019, Region 9 DRS Vocational Rehabilitation programs have served 1096 individuals with disabilities under the age of 21 and 717 individuals with disabilities over the age of 21.

Community Colleges through regular and adult education programming provide accommodations for students who disclose. SWIC's Disability and Access Center is responsible for providing or coordinating legally mandated access and accommodations for students that are registered with the center and that have provided appropriate documentation from a qualified professional about the functional impact of their disability. The center also schedules individualized intake-appointments and provides college/community referrals for vocational students who are eligible for services based on one or more of the following criteria: financially challenged; single parent; displaced homemaker; nontraditional student; limited English language skills. Services are district-wide and are available at each of SWIC's four campuses. All entities are required to maintain compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the American Disabilities Act. L&C has a unique focus on students with disabilities through programming designed specifically to transition students with disabilities to college and/or work.

IDES provides training and administrative support to vocational rehabilitation counselors who utilize the Career Information System through the partnership with Illinois Department of Human Services Department of Rehabilitative Services. Additionally, the Help Wanted On-Line monthly reports identify which employers are hiring and which occupational groups are most in demand based on the online job ads in all ten economic development regions throughout the state of Illinois. IDES refers individuals to supportive services depending on their needs and barriers to employment. IDES also provides job readiness workshops on resumes, job search, application methods, interview techniques and other topics and refers individuals to supportive services depending on their needs and barriers to employment.

There were 1,120 formerly incarcerated adults in the region as of 2018.

DRS reaches out specifically to provide education/training to assist them to reenter the workforce with companies that accommodate this population.

Illinois Department of Employment Security continues to offer the Re-entry Employment Service Program (RESP). RESP is a program that offers several tools and resources to guide formerly incarcerated citizens to employment.

23.5% of the people in Illinois speak a non-English language. In Region 9, there are approximately 3,863 immigrants.

While all partners serve this population when appropriate, most send these learners to community colleges' adult education programs that provide specific courses for English Language Acquisition and civics education. The colleges also house literacy programs that provide trained volunteer tutors to support this population.

In addition, IDES, MCETD, DRS and St Clair IGD provide interpreter service both language and sign when necessary.

DRS has a specially trained counselor who works with deaf customers in the region. All DRS forms are translated to Spanish within the system, and can be converted to other languages as well.

Much of the Illinois Career Information System converts to Spanish with one click. Parents may participate in preparing their young children to investigate careers with the CIS Junior version, appropriate for fifth through eighth grade students. There is a version for all of our customers, including high school and college students as well as adults who are developing plans to improve their future while working. The Virtual Labor Market Information is especially helpful when adults begin to explore the options available to them in their local area, including locating businesses, contact information, and maps to their locations.

In 2018, EDR 9 experienced an average of 15,801 unemployed individuals and a 4.6% unemployment rate.

WIOA Title IB provides the framework for a unique workforce preparation and employment system designed to meet both the needs of the job seeker and those that wish to further their careers. A key component of the Act is its focus on meeting the needs of local businesses for skilled workers. Utilizing testing, assessments and case management, specialist guide unemployed and under employed WIOA customers to the level of assistance required for self-sustainability. Resources available include resume writing assistance, interview technique, job search and where appropriate training. All services are designed to facilitate a highly skilled highly motivated workforce for area employers. Employers can take advantage of recruitment, screening and labor market information to match the skill set of a prospect to job requirements. Additionally, on the job training, apprenticeships and incumbent worker training can strengthen and advance an employer's existing workforce often times creating a demand for additional employees.

DRS will provide vocational training and/or education to assist these individuals with disabilities who want to work. Assistance includes help to make informed decisions and access to full community participation through employment, education, and independent living options.

Community Colleges provide low-cost, high-quality educational options for unemployed individuals in the region. In addition, when customers need basic skills to help with employment, the colleges provide literacy services, tutoring, vocational programs, Bridge programs, accelerated learning programs and HSE preparation.

IDES ensures that eligible individuals receive the unemployment insurance benefits to which they are entitled. Efficiently and effectively administering benefits prevents the negative effects of economic downturns on businesses and the unemployed. IDES protects taxpayers against waste, fraud and abuse by ensuring the integrity of wage reports and unemployment claims. They provide workshops on job readiness including resumes, job search, application methods, interview techniques and other topics. They also refer individuals to supportive services depending on their needs and barriers to employment.

The Jobseeker version of the Career Information System is available at job centers and includes career plan and portfolio for determining their Holland type preferences and beginning with their interests to learn how to achieve career goals. Virtual Labor Market Information helps jobseekers locate employers by industry including convenient information about the business' size, contact information, and maps to the locations.

DRS will provide training, education, job placement, supported employment and/or job retention services to assist individuals with disabilities to enter into competitive, integrated employment. Assistance includes help to make informed decisions and access to full community participation through employment, education, and independent living options.

There are 116,583 individuals age 65 and older in the region. All partners will service these individuals through already existing services.

WIOA Title IB refers eligible seniors to Caritas Family Solution's SCSEP work program.

DRS will provide older individuals of any age who want to work assistance with employment through training, education, job placement, supported employment and/or job retention.

IDES provides job readiness workshops on resumes, job search, application methods, interview techniques and offers individualized service to individuals over age of 65.

Another special population to consider is our military veterans. Approximately 59,709 people in the region were veterans in 2018. All partners in the region are committed and give priority to providing quality services to their active service members and veterans.

Region 9 WIOA partners (LWIAs 22 & 24) engage with the Airman and Family Readiness Center at Scott Airforce Base to work with those who are transitioning from active military and their families, providing them with employment and training services as well as referring them to other agencies within their community for additional assistance.

Community colleges each have specific staff members who serve as a one stop shop for veteran students and active military, advising students on everything from course schedules and financial assistance to military educational benefits options to allow for training and advancement during active services periods and after and apply for their Federal and State Veteran Educational benefits. They offer student veterans opportunities for employment by participating in the VA Work Study program. Student veterans also have access to Career Services and participate in multiple career and college fairs targeted toward the veteran population.

Assisting veterans in finding gainful employment is a top priority at IDES. In conjunction with our WIOA Partners, we are co-located in nearly 40 American Job Centers (AJC) throughout Illinois with Employment Specialists available to provide a full array of employment services to assist veterans in gaining meaningful careers. The Veterans Career Coach-DVOP works with veterans with significant barriers to employment as identified by the U.S. Department of Labor – Veterans Employment and Training Services (DOL-VETS) through the use of Individualized Career Services to include the Case Management Process, as applicable. Veterans may be referred to internal and external AJC partners, local, state, and federal organizations for specific resources, as determined by the veterans’ needs. The Veterans Outreach Specialist – LVER works with the Veterans Career Coach to develop job opportunities for these veterans as well as advocates for all veterans to businesses and business groups / organizations.

Finally, at risk youth, both in school and out of school, are populations that are important to include in this discussion.

Youth (in school). Madison High School’s youth program and Madison County E-Learning program, in some situations, serve the in-school at risk youth population. Through these programs, the youth learn basic academic learning skills, soft skills, career planning, work skills thru paid work experience opportunities, and earn their high school diploma.

IDES offers the Hire the Future Program to youth in or out of school ages 16-24 with employment assistance, job readiness and career development services (entitled the Career

information System-CIS as well as the Virtual Labor Market Information Tool-VLMI) in Madison, Jersey, Calhoun, St. Clair, Randolph, Washington, Monroe and Clinton Counties.

DRS provides transition services to in school youth to assist them in making informed decisions about their future. Counselors in Region 9 serve 33 high schools for transition services and/or the Secondary Transition Experience Program (STEP). The STEP program services the students with disabilities as a training/placement program that prepares the students for transition to employment and optimum community participation during and after high school. The program focuses on Pre-employment transition services, such as Job Exploration Counseling, Work - based Learning Experience, Counseling on Post-Secondary Education, Workplace Readiness Training and Instruction in Self Advocacy. DRS works with these students in high school and continues to work with them through college or employment after school.

Community Colleges serve in school youth by offering dual credit for eligible students dually enrolled in high school and community college classes.

Youth (out of school). Several WIOA youth programs, MERS /Missouri Goodwill Programs in Madison and Bond Counties, the Madison County E-Learning program, L&C Youth Program and the 1Y training programs for older youth, if eligible, all serve the out-of-school youth population.

DRS will provide out of school youth of any age assistance with employment through training, education, job placement, supported employment and/or job retention. DRS is also working with the Juvenile Justice program to assist youth re-entering their communities with obtaining competitive, integrated employment.

Community colleges through college transition programs target this age group with unique pathways to college, such as ICAPS and Bridge programs. These programs are not limited to these age groups but are trying to target them. In addition, L&C is targeting these young people (16-24) with Building Futures Youth Build, a comprehensive education, training, and leadership development effort that incorporates basic building skills and community service to transition young people to college and/or work.

SWIC serves out-of-school youth in St. Clair, Randolph, and Madison County through two special programs: (1) Education to Careers Program, serving youth ages 16 to 24 years old that have dropped out of high school by providing participants instruction and guidance towards earning an Illinois High School Equivalency Certificate, job skills training, opportunities for school-based and work-based learning experiences related to a career choice, and assistance with transition into post-secondary education and/or employment; (2) Youth Empowerment Support Services Program (YESS), which provides ABE/ASE instruction, guidance/counseling,

mentoring, tutoring, intensive case management, paid work experience, study skills training, work readiness training, and job assistance to eligible youth not attending high school between the ages of 16 and 24 living in St. Clair and Randolph counties. Both SWIC and L&C provide adult basic education, High School Equivalency Test preparation and English Language Acquisition courses to this population.

IDES offers the Hire the Future Program to youth in or out of school ages 16-24 with employment assistance, job readiness and career development services (entitled the Career information System-CIS as well as the Virtual Labor Market Information Tool-VLMI) in Madison, Jersey and Calhoun Counties. Summer Job Central offers information to youth seeking summer employment opportunities.

IDES coordinates Career Planning and Employment Workshop Series at Illinois Youth Center Pere Marquette Grafton, Illinois. IYC-Pere Marquette is a level three, minimum security male facility with an open campus. It is the first step-down juvenile facility totally dedicated to reintegrating the youth back into the community. The Career Planning and Employment workshop series provide the youth the opportunity to participate in discussions regarding career and employment, as well as complete assignments, use websites and review material provided to expand their knowledge of potential career paths and employment opportunities. The goal is for the youth to be able to make educated decision about their futures. The series is interactive requiring youth participation and last 6-8 weeks.

B. Describe the development and implementation of sector initiatives for in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the planning region (§ 679.510(a)(1)(iii)). Plans must answer the following questions:

1. How will the workforce partners convene employers, foundations and regional institutions to help lead sector partnerships and make coordinated investments?

The Regional Navigator has conducted site visits and gathered business feedback surveys for several employers in the listed target occupations. The employers have identified an immediate need for employees and a long-term need for employees to be competitive and possibly expand. The Navigator plans to use apprenticeships and incumbent worker training to meet the immediate need for employees and use Talent Pipeline Management strategies to work with the secondary and post-secondary educational partners to solve the long-term needs of the employers.

2. Identify the established and active industry sector partnerships in the region (as defined in Illinois' Next Generation Sector Strategies Guide6)?

The Regional Navigator has spent the last four years building a network of Community Based Organizations (CBO's), Educational Providers, Governmental Workforce and Economic Development partners, Governmental Assistance partners, Chambers of Commerce and Employers.

At current, the collaborative effort consists of:

- 174 business contacts
- 30 Community Based Organization participants
- 5 Chambers of Commerce groups
- 7 colleges
- 4 Community Development entities
- 9 Economic Development entities
- 7 federal organizations
- 4 government assistance agencies
- 2 high school disability transition planning councils
- 1 Illinois State Board of Education partner
- 4 regional high school vocational training centers
- 3 Regional Offices of Education
- 3 school districts
- 19 workforce development groups
- 4 core Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act of 2014 partners
- 12 Various Community Partners

3. What other sector-based partnerships exist in the region? If any exist, are they business-led and what is their role in planning?

South Central Illinois Growth Alliance (SCIGA)

Kaskaskia acts as the primary engine and meeting center for the South Central Illinois Growth Alliance (SCIGA). SCIGA is a five-county not-for-profit corporation offering tremendous opportunities for business and individuals. It is committed to establishing, promoting, maintaining and continually developing financial, industrial, agricultural, and tourism initiatives

as well as other regional activities for the development, attraction, and retention of business, industries and commerce within the region. The counties of Bond, Clinton, Fayette, Marion and Washington offer what companies are searching for: fully developed locations, a quality workforce, exceptional educational and workforce training initiatives and facilities, and outstanding medical services as well as numerous recreational opportunities.

Community College Advisory Committees

The community colleges in the region, Lewis & Clark College, Southwestern Illinois College and Kaskaskia College, all include business representatives on their advisory committee for each career program.

4. What other public-private partnerships exist in the region that could support sector strategies and what is their role in planning?

Workforce Innovation Boards

Both WIBs in the region are led by business representation and support sector strategy work in the region.

Madison-Bond-Jersey-Calhoun WIB- The purpose of the Madison-Bond-Jersey-Calhoun Workforce Innovation Board is to ensure the integration of services to prepare individuals to meet the needs of businesses and industry. The Board's mission is to take a leadership role in advocating, planning, evaluating, and developing local workforce resources in order to enable individuals and businesses to reach their full potential in a changing global marketplace. The Madison-Bond-Jersey-Calhoun WIB shall, in conjunction with the Madison County Employment and Training Department, its administrative entity, use available funding in ways that will most effectively satisfy the labor demand needs of the residents and business community of Madison-Bond-Jersey-Calhoun Counties and enhance the economic well-being of the community.

Mid America WIB (MAWIB) - MAWIB is a collaboration of business, economic development, education, human resources, community and labor leaders seeking to improve Southwestern Illinois. They do this in many ways that include:

- ✓ Serving as a point of contact for business, industry and the public sector to communicate their workforce needs.
- ✓ Promoting strategies to encourage life-long learning and improve workplace skills.
- ✓ Assisting in the development of new training programs to benefit the region's workforce.
- ✓ Conducting planning, oversight, and evaluation of local workforce development programs, including the local One Stop Delivery System.

- ✓ Coordinating efforts and activities with economic development to promote the region's availability of qualified workers and promote coordination among business and the public sector.

Southwestern Illinois Development Authority (SWIDA)

SWIDA is Southwestern Illinois' hands-on regional economic development authority. Through its partnerships with parties in the public and private sectors, the organization works to jumpstart investments in St. Louis' Metro East region, helping to take plans off the drawing board and turn them into bricks and mortar. Operating as a special-purpose, municipal corporation and local government unit, the Southwestern Illinois Development Authority (SWIDA) was created by the Illinois state legislature in 1987 to promote, encourage and facilitate economic development in the Southwestern Illinois counties of Bond, Clinton, Madison and St. Clair. Since its inception, nearly 30 years ago, SWIDA's work to jumpstart investments in the four-county region has transformed the landscape, helped to create and retain jobs and fueled economic growth in the Metro East. SWIDA receives no tax dollars, but operates solely on the revenue it earns for the services it provides. The organization achieves results through a variety of channels including the sale of taxable and tax-exempt bonds; alternative financing services such as loans for land acquisition, gap financing and micro loans; real estate development services and technical development assistance. The agency has also supported a range of projects that have contributed to the revitalization of East St. Louis.

5. What neutral conveners with the capacity to help establish sector partnerships exist in the region and what is their role in planning?

Chambers of Commerce in the Southwestern Region

The local Chambers of Commerce in the region work to develop and deepen local relationship networks to promote business activity and business-to-business exchanges. Some also serve as an economic development organization for their area. Some of the larger Chambers present in EDR 9 are:

Chamber of Commerce of Southwestern Madison County represents the cities of Granite City, Madison, Venice, the Village of Pontoon Beach, and the unincorporated area known as Mitchell. The Chamber works to meet the needs of local businesses while engaging in promoting the civic and economic development of the area.

Edwardsville-Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce represents the city of Edwardsville and the village of Glen Carbon, as well as the surrounding area. The Chamber represents nearly 500 businesses, and strategic partners include the U.S. and Illinois Chambers of Commerce, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, Lewis and Clark Community College, Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois, Small Business Administration, and Tourism Bureau ILLINOISouth.

Greater Belleville Chamber of Commerce supports and advances business and community interests, as well as the quality of life in Belleville and surrounding communities. Their mission is “Advancing business. Supporting community.”

Metro-East Regional Chamber of Commerce serves businesses in Fairview Heights and Swansea as well as business members in surrounding communities. This Chamber of Commerce was organized to provide its members with the services, information, marketing, and resources to sustain and support their businesses, as well as to create opportunities for a healthy economic and tax base in support of the Village of Swansea and City of Fairview Heights.

O’Fallon-Shiloh Chamber of Commerce serves the city of O’Fallon and the Village of Shiloh, as well as surrounding areas. Their mission is to welcome, unite, and promote business in the community by fostering economic growth. The O’Fallon-Shiloh area is the home for many military members from nearby SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE.

Riverbend Growth Association (RGA) is both the Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Organization for the communities of the Riverbend. As a Chamber of Commerce, they actively promote activities between their member businesses. As an Economic Development Organization, they work closely with state, regional, county and local officials to develop new employment opportunities. The Growth Association serves the following communities in southwestern Illinois: Alton, Bethalto, East Alton, Elsah, Foster Township, Godfrey, Grafton, Hartford, Roxana, South Roxana, Wood River and Wood River Township.

Highland Chamber of Commerce serves the city of Highland. The Chamber’s mission is Community Prosperity: Making Highland the best place to live, learn, work, shop, and play - a task not hard to do in such a vivacious community. The Chamber is an advocate and service organization for business. It provides a venue through which business professionals can take effective action for the progress and growth of their communities.

Collinsville Chamber of Commerce serves the city of Collinsville. The Chamber has spearheaded major efforts to enhance the community and increase its attractiveness as an important place to live, play, invest and do business. We offer opportunities for our members to grow their own businesses while helping the community put its best foot forward.

Troy/Maryville/St Jacob/Marine Area Chamber of Commerce is in its third decade of serving the community, and currently has over 400 members. Their mission is to promote business development and networking in order to enhance the growth and self-sufficiency within their community and surrounding areas.

St Louis Regional Chamber of Commerce is the region's largest business organization, representing the St. Louis business community across 15 counties in both Missouri and Illinois. We champion a greater St. Louis region by serving as a catalyst for regional economic opportunity and forward-thinking public policy. Their core mission is to convene like-minded business professionals and serve as a catalyst for the regional economy.

CHAPTER 2: STRATEGIES FOR SERVICE INTEGRATION – REGIONAL COMPONENT

This regional component of the plan must describe the regional service strategies, including use of cooperative service delivery strategies and the connection of job seekers with employers.

A. Provide an analysis of workforce development activities, including education and training, in the region. This analysis must include the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities and capacity to provide the workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment and the employment needs of employers. Plans must respond to the following:

1. Analyze the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities in the region. Economic Development Region 9 (EDR 9) has many workforce development strengths, many of which have expanded and grown over the past few years. Whether it's serving businesses, working with individual job seekers or partnering on a regional project, EDR 9's greatest strength is its strong collaboration among its WIOA core and extended partners. This collaboration benefits the 9 counties within EDR 9, but also often times extends across the river to our Missouri workforce partners. Some of these regional collaborative efforts and strengths have included the following:

- ***Apprenticeship Expansion Grant*** - \$400,000 grant through Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity to fund the Regional Apprenticeship Navigator and to promote and grow registered apprenticeships. In addition, the EDR 9 consortium has applied for 3 additional grants totaling \$700,000.
- ***Service Integration Technical Assistant Grant*** - \$100,000 grant application through Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity to fund a Resource Room/Career Navigator in the one-stop resource room. Both LWIA 22 and 24 have applied for their own individual grant, but will coordinate their efforts on a regional basis to coordinate service integration

- **MOU Partnerships** – LWIA 22 and 24 continue to maintain successful partnerships and Memorandums of Understanding for their respective certified one-stops. This includes successful completion of the one-stop certification process.
- **Jobs Plus** – Annual regional job fair that is co-sponsored by the WIOA partners and will be celebrating its 30th year in September 2020.
- **Metro-East Business Services Team** – Regional Business Services team that includes the WIOA partners and additional organizations. The team has many accomplishments to date, including the introduction of *Talent Pipeline Management (TPM)* and many collaborative efforts such as the recent regional apprenticeship event and numerous hiring, community and career day events.
- **Additional Examples Of The Region’s Strong Collaborations** – KETC American Graduate, Bridging The Talent Gap Report, St. Louis Regional WIB Consortium, Southwestern Illinois College’s Annual Manufacturing Day, Kaskaskia/Southwestern Illinois Growth Alliance’s Manufacturing Career Fair, Accommodations For Success Reverse Job Fair, SICAP Construction Industry Career Expo, SIUE Digital Badging Project, Gateway Trade Port and the Mid America Intermodal Gateway Business Park.

Southwestern Illinois College received a \$1.4 million grant (Workforce Equity Initiative) to advance workforce equity needs in its region by creating, supporting, and expanding short-term workforce training opportunities in high need communities focused on specific section with identified workforce gaps.

Despite these many strengths within our region, there are still weaknesses within the workforce development system that are being addressed on an ongoing basis. These weaknesses include a lack of overall available workforce participants to fill the many open positions in our region. In addition, as addressed in the previously mentioned *Bridging The Talent Gap* report and outlined in the state’s unified plan, there is an urgent need to develop career pathways and strategies to fill skills gaps, strengthen our workforce and grow our talent pipeline. Finally, our last perceived weakness is related to a lack of workforce development funding. Working within a system that continues to see annual budget cuts has made it difficult to not only maintain staffing, but it is a challenge to direct outreach and name recognition efforts. However, EDR 9 has recognized these weaknesses in the system, acknowledged them and is utilizing its many strengths to deal with them.

2. Analyze the capacity of the regional partners to provide workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce including individuals with barriers to employment.

EDR 9 as part of its collaboration with its WIOA and other partners has a variety of programs and services in place to address the education and skill needs for the workforce, including individuals that are harder to serve or have significant barriers to finding employment, retaining employment and finding a suitable career pathway. The following are some of the programs and services throughout the region designed to address those needs:

- ***Big Steps*** – Program to enhance the ability of public and private sector organizations to recruit, develop, and retain a more diverse, qualified workforce in construction, manufacturing and emerging sectors of the regional economy.
- ***Accommodations For Success*** – A regional reverse job fair geared toward job seekers with a disability.
- ***Nexus Group*** (as part of the Regional Business Services Team) - Community agencies coming together *to leverage career opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment through collaboration and business partnership*
- ***Cahokia and Belleville 201 Fairs*** – Local career fairs designed to promote career and technical education opportunities, especially hard to serve and underserved students.
- ***SIUE/East St. Louis Higher Education Center*** – Run by a consortium of educational providers (SIUE, LCCC & SWIC), the center is designed to promote a variety of educational and work-based learning opportunities for hard to serve and underserved youth & adults.
- ***TAP*** – Transition Assistance Program for Veterans, conducted at Scott Air Force Base every two weeks. The class is designed to provide career and educational information to transitioning military personnel and their spouses.
- ***Project Homeless Connect*** – Annual event intended to engage homeless individuals and families to learn about and receive numerous services.
- ***Connections To Success*** – Regional comprehensive network of services and support to help people living in poverty become economically self-sufficient.
- ***LCCC Supported College Transition Program*** – Academic preparation and support services provided to students with limited mainstreaming activity in high school.
- ***EDR 9 Vocational Schools*** – Area vocational centers offering many certificate programs and preparation for post-secondary education & employment.
- ***EDR 9 Transition Events*** – Numerous regional events offering a variety of resources to students that are transitioning from high school to adulthood.
- ***Madison County & St. Clair County Career & Technical Education Programs (CTE)*** – Career and technical education programs current and relevant to meet industry standards and needs.
- ***CSBG Skills Training*** – Training and other programs designed for CSBG eligible participants.

- ***Bridge Programming & ICAPS*** – Adult Education programs focusing on contextualized bridge programs and ICAPS (Integrated Career and Academic Preparation System) integrated instructional models.
- ***SWIC Technical Education*** – Custom designed programming and career readiness for employment in advanced manufacturing.
- ***Illinois Department of Rehabilitation Services*** – DRS offers employment support services at the time of referral to assist with job retention as well as ongoing assistance for an extended period of time.

3. Analyze the capacity of the regional partners to provide activities to address the needs of employers.

Economic Development Region 9 (EDR 9), comprised of LWIA 22 and 24, has developed a Regional Business Services Team to address business needs throughout the 9-county region. Officially named the *Metro-East Business Services Team*, it is comprised of 20 plus members that incorporate WIOA partners as well as additional organizations that serve the business community. Also, the team works closely with municipal, county and state economic development organizations in Illinois & Missouri as well as numerous chambers of commerce. The team has also been going through an ongoing self-assessment and continuous improvement process since its inception. These accomplishments and partnerships have included Illinois Job Link training & access, SWOT Analysis, Asset Mapping, Talent Pipeline Management, Nexus Group and team services brochures as well as a future business services team certification. Led by EDR 9's Regional Apprenticeship Navigator, the group has also led many efforts to promote, grow and expand regional apprenticeships in the region. On January 23rd of this year, the team assisted in organizing a regional apprenticeship event that hosted 100 plus attendees.

The Metro-East Business Services Team members have also been responsible for organizing hiring events at the local one-stops as well as at offsite locations. The team members as well as other partners organize an annual job fair entitled “Jobs Plus”, which will celebrate its 30th year in September 2020. Beyond hiring events and assisting businesses with recruitment needs, the team also works to provide informational workshops for businesses as well as individuals. For example, Illinois Department of Employment Security hosts quarterly employer roundtables throughout the region. In addition, the business services team partners with organizations such as the South Central Illinois Growth Alliance (SCIGA) to present information on apprenticeships and other topics relevant to the business community. The team is also partnering with numerous high schools and vocational training institutions to promote career and technical educational opportunities to students and parents as part of the region's efforts to grow its talent pipeline.

4. How well do existing training programs in the region and local areas prepare job seekers to enter and retain employment with regional businesses?

One of the major ways that EDR 9 addresses the need for a skilled and prepared workforce is through a variety of work-based learning strategies. These “earn while you learn” initiatives provide an opportunity for an individual to upgrade their skills as part of a career pathways model while also earning wages. Also, some of these programs are often times shorter in duration than normal training programs. These work-based learning strategies include the following:

Perkins V:

Career and technical programs offered by community colleges in the region prepare individuals for high-skill, high-wage, in-demand employment that furthers Illinois’ global competitiveness. Throughout the academic year, SWIC and Lewis and Clark representatives engage with employers to ensure that their training programs are designed to meet employers needs and that students have access to industry experts and work-based learning opportunities.

WIOA Work Based Learning Opportunities:

- **Registered Apprenticeships**

LWIA 22 and 24, comprising the Economic Development Region 9 (EDR 9) Consortium, are currently administering an Apprenticeship Expansion Grant. The grant focuses on increasing registered apprenticeship opportunities within manufacturing and healthcare. Three additional apprenticeship grant applications have been submitted on behalf of the Consortium in anticipation of growing and expanding these apprenticeship opportunities.

- **Paid Work Experience**

LWIA 22 and 24 both partner with local business developing paid work experience opportunities in both the public and private sector to enrolled adults and youth for many years. It can be a first job experience or it can be series of jobs at a worksite with increasing responsibility, sometimes creating a career pathway of work opportunities.

A youth paid work experience is most likely the introduction of the young person to their first experience in the world of work. With the worksite’s assistance, they learn the challenges and the rewards of gainful employment, and it is usually a positive experience for both the youth and the worksite supervisor. Explanation regarding a youth's interest in employment generally revolves around their desire to earn money. We feel this explanation merely scans the surface. For some youth, it is an opportunity to start a productive adult life, and a means to stay occupied

and avoid delinquency. For others, it is a real opportunity to develop skills and experience for useful and meaningful employment.

The adult paid work experience program provides participants with valuable work to gain desirable soft and hard skills that will enable them to compete in the workforce. As the participant performs job duties at the worksite, he/she is afforded a productive learning experience. Emphasis is placed on learning the attitudes, habits, and behavior necessary for regular employment. Another important aspect is the opportunity for adults to get their first job in an occupation in which they have just received a credential. The ultimate goal is for the adult to be exited with valuable work experience, sufficient training and a credential in which to move on to a career pathway and find a permanent, full-time job with self-sufficient wages.

- **On-The-Job Training (OJT)**

On-the-job training has been offered as an option to local employers/jobseekers for the past several years. An OJT involves a business hiring a WIOA eligible participant as a full-time, permanent employee. Based on a skills gap analysis and training curriculum, a portion of the employee's wages will be reimbursed back to the company during the training period. At the successful conclusion of training, the employee has upgraded their skills while meeting the company's need as well.

- **Incumbent Worker Training**

Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) is another training option being offered to area employers. Incumbent Worker Training provides employers with a means of working with their current employees in need of increased skills. IWT provides hands on training, payment to offset training costs and the opportunity to train to the employer's standards. Both LWIA 22 and LWIA 24 have been very successful using this tool to help area manufacturers increase productivity, upgrade their current workforce's skill level, provide opportunities for promotion as well as the backfilling of open positions. The primary focus thus far has been in the manufacturing sector however we are beginning to explore opportunities in other high growth sectors as well.

EDR 9 WIOA and extended partners also provide a variety of programs & services designed to assist job seekers as they seek to enter and retain employment. For example, Illinois Department of Rehabilitation Services provides supportive services from the point of referral up to a possible two years after employment. LWIA 22 and 24 offer supportive services during training and follow up assistance and referrals related to employment. Veteran's services are offered through the Illinois Department of Employment Security and "soft skills" training is available through many of the partners.

5. Summarize the commitments of each program partner to implement the selected strategies described in the "Action Plan for Improving Service Integration in the Region."

Both LWIA's, 22 and 24, conducted service integration self-assessments in their respective areas and then held service integration service integration planning meetings. In each area, the core partners as well as the extended one-stop partners were greatly involved in prioritizing 3 goals as part of the Next Steps Action Planning Tool. LWIA 22 decided to prioritize goals 3, 12 and 13 & LWIA 24 prioritized goals 1, 4 and 8a.

As part of the planning tool, each partner was assigned individual activities, outcomes and deadlines to meet the group's policy goals. To date, the policy goals for each LWIA are on target for successful completion.

B. Describe how transportation and other supportive services are coordinated within the region.

1. What regional organizations currently provide or could provide supportive services?

- Region 9 boasts an excellent mass transit system including bus and light rail & Metro Link. The schedules are available at the job centers to assist customers who rely on public transportation.
- Door to door Paratransit services are available to qualifying individuals with a disability that are unable to utilize Madison County Transit (MCT) or Alternative Transportation Service (ATS) in St. Clair County. MCT and ATS also provide travel training programs to teach riders how to travel confidently and independently.
- Salvation Army: Alton Corps issues bus passes to residents of their *Booth House* homeless shelter who are looking for employment.
- Catholic Urban Programs will provide a bus pass to low-income residents who have begun employment for their first week until they receive a paycheck.
- Southwestern Illinois College provides transportation services for students enrolled in their programs, including bus and Metro Link passes. They also provide career training (inclusive of how to conduct a job search, resume development, interviewing skills and on the job behaviors), transition services (inclusive of filing for FAFSA and other forms of financial aid and enrolling in college classes at SWIC) and childcare assistance (through Children's Home and Aid). In addition, all students are entitled to utilize SWIC's Disability and Access Center, Student Success Center, Library, computer labs and free, on-campus parking. SWIC also provides an office at both its Granite City and Belleville Campus that is a single point of contact for all students being funded through WIOA/TAA programs in various Workforce Development Areas in Illinois and Missouri. This enables the customer to deal only with one office at the College staffed by personnel with knowledge of College requirements and Government Regulations.
- Metro St. Louis-Travel Training Program teaches persons who are elderly or have a disability how to use public transportation in St. Clair County, St. Louis City and St.

Louis County. Once a participant is comfortable with their progress and able to travel independently, a customized travel route is developed.

- Community Hope Center provides weekly computer classes and budgeting food dollar classes.
- Urban League offers computer courses and a variety of other job readiness classes & services in Fairview Heights and St. Louis.
- The MET Center offers training programs for special populations requiring supportive services on both the Missouri and Illinois side of the river.
- Madison County Employment and Training (LWIA 22) offers free Madison County Transit bus passes to their youth and veteran customers that need to come to the one stop center for job search, see an employer for a job interview, or initially need transportation to a new job until they receive their first paycheck.
- LWIA 22 offers other supportive services to their WIOA enrolled customers to assist in filling an employment or training need. An example of this need may be auto insurance payment, limited child care while conducting a job search or attending an interview, a car repair payment, rent assistance, temporary shelter payment, utility payment, job interview clothing, or other legitimate need of a customer that is reasonable and necessary.
- LWIA 24 provides transportation and childcare on a case-by-case basis. Also, LWIA 24 refers clients to appropriate agencies within their county of residence for additional supportive services, i.e., LIHEAP, CSBG, etc.
- The Community Resource Packet published by Madison County Community Development offers a comprehensive regional compilation of supportive service providers
http://www.co.madison.il.us/Community_Development/RevisedResourceGuide2015_LMM.pdf
- St. Clair County Intergovernmental Grants Department (IGD) offers a listing of supportive services through its office at 19 Public Square, Suite 200, Belleville, Illinois 62220 or at <http://www.co.st-clair.il.us/departments/grants/Pages/default.aspx>
- The Madison County Career and Technical Education Program has placed an increased focus on connecting with their high school counselors to share information regarding career opportunities in the CTE fields. They have an annual joint counselor meeting with schools from this region of the state. During the past few years, they have asked CTE students to sit on a panel and share their experiences with the counselors. As a result, the counselors have and continue to become increasingly aware of the impact high school CTE programs have had on their students (and not just dumping grounds for students who are not otherwise able/willing to perform). The counselors are also learning about the importance of the opportunities available in the workforce without a traditional four-year university education, including Process Operations Program at LCCC and Registered Apprenticeship Programs through the local trades. Counselors are realizing

once again that high school CTE programs are a very viable way to bridge many of the current skills gaps.

- Illinois Department of Rehabilitation Services (Madison County and St. Clair County) provides books, transportation, assistive technology, information and referral/counseling and guidance and other substantial services to customers who qualify.
- The standardized curriculums used by Adult Education providers include instruction designed to enhance individual's self-management skills, ability to develop interpersonal relationships and workplace readiness skills.
- IMPACT CIL offers a Community Technology Center/Learning Lab that is available upon an appointment request. Individualized assistance is available for keyboarding skills, WORD, PowerPoint, Email, Internet usage, as well as other basic career development skills (resume and cover letter writing and job searching).

2. What policies and procedures will be established to promote coordination of supportive services delivery?

Through partner meetings and continuing cross-training among partners, policies and procedures may be established to promote coordination of supportive services delivery by ensuring that:

- Sufficient supportive services funding is available
- Skilled program leaders and staff maintain linkages and coordination
- Collaborative partners share a common purpose and have understanding of the customer's needs
- Initiatives with a customer do not take a "one size fits all" approach
- The timeline for the customer career plan must be reasonable
- Communication among collaborating partners by utilizing partner referral form.
- Resource Room/Career Navigator, as proposed in the service integration technical assistance grant application, will assist in the coordination and streamlining of support service referral process and delivery.
- Expand Career Center focus toward longer-term career development with Career Information System and Career Clusters

C. Describe the coordination of services with regional economic development services and WIOA service providers:

1. What economic development organizations, WIOA service providers or businesses are actively engaged in regional planning?

St. Louis Regional Chamber creates economic opportunities by leading initiatives that achieve greater workforce readiness, inclusion, entrepreneurship and innovation.

Southwestern Illinois Development Authority works with the public and private sectors to jumpstart investment and job creation & retention.

Chamber of Commerce of Southwestern Madison County represents the cities of Granite City, Madison, Venice, the Village of Pontoon Beach, and the unincorporated area known as Mitchell.

Edwardsville-Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce represents nearly 500 businesses in the city of Edwardsville and village of Glen Carbon.

Collinsville Chamber of Commerce serves the business community in the City of Collinsville through supporting growth and economic develop opportunities.

Riverbend Growth Association is both the Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Organization for Alton, Bethalto, East Alton, Elsau, Foster Township, Godfrey, Grafton, Hartford, Roxana, South Roxana, Wood River and the Wood River Township.

Troy/Maryville/St. Jacob/Marine Area Chamber of Commerce promotes business development and networking to enhance growth in their communities.

Greater Belleville Chamber of Commerce supports and advances business and community interests, promoting the quality of life in Belleville and surrounding communities.

Metro-East Regional Chamber of Commerce serves businesses in Fairview Heights and Swansea and works to support businesses and create economic opportunities.

O'Fallon-Shiloh Chamber of Commerce serves the city of O'Fallon and the village of Shiloh by promoting business and fostering economic growth.

Highland Chamber of Commerce serves the city of Highland. The Chamber's mission is Community Prosperity: Making Highland the best place to live, learn, work, shop and play. The chamber is an advocate and service organization for business and provides a venue through

which business professionals can take effective action for the progress and growth of their communities.

South Central Illinois Growth Alliance (SCIGA) is committed to establishing, promoting, maintaining and continually developing financial, industrial and agricultural & tourism activities for the development, attraction and retention of business, industry and the economic vitality of the region.

East Side Aligned promotes policy, practice and investment across sectors to ensure all children & youth within the greater East St. Louis area are supported and ready for life.

Madison County Community Development houses an economic development division that offers a wide range of programs to help businesses cost-effectively locate and expand their operations within Madison County. These programs are designed to provide assistance in the form of tax incentives, business financing, infrastructure development, employee recruitment and training, and general technical assistance such as confidential site location services. A network of economic development assistance organizations, staffed by experienced professionals at the state, regional, and local level, are linked together in Madison County to provide optimum assistance to businesses interested in development or expansion in the County. This network is ready to utilize all available resources to confidentially develop a comprehensive incentive proposal.

St. Clair County Intergovernmental Grants Department (IGD) The Intergovernmental Grants Department serves as an umbrella agency containing three divisions providing services to the public. They are Community Development; Community Services; and Workforce Development. Economic Development activities are also administered by IGD's Executive Director.

LWIA 22 and 24 One-Stop MOU Partners (core and other partners) actively promote and administer services for both businesses and individuals under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

2. What economic development organizations, WIOA service providers or businesses were invited to participate but declined?

Job Corps – LWIA 24, located at the Belleville One-Stop Center, was the only organization that was invited but has not participated in the regional planning process.

D. Describe the coordination of administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate.

If an issue would be found that is not addressed in our local MOU's, we will proceed as follows: In the event of a need for administrative cost pooling or coordination, the involved parties will enter into negotiations. Any administrative costs will be reviewed by the partners and examined for appropriate cost allocation. The results of this procedure will determine the course of action to be taken to address administrative costs sharing.

If an issue would arise that is not addressed by the MOU and budget, the local WIOA agrees to absorb any administrative costs until such time that appropriate cost allocation can be reviewed and negotiated among the one-stop partners. Given the current state budget crisis and its toll on one-stop partner budgets, this would be the most effective way to address administrative costs in a timely manner. Recent examples of partner negotiations include the One-Stop Operator Consortium and the agreement to negotiate the funding of a resource room navigator after the expiration of a proposed service integration grant.

CHAPTER 3: VISION, GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES-REGIONAL COMPONENT

This section will outline how the Local Board(s) will coordinate the regional workforce, education and economic development activities with regional activities that are carried out in the local areas. The responses must illustrate that business, education and workforce development stakeholders have provided input and are involved with the development of the strategies and to ensure alignment with other plans.

A. Describe the local strategic vision to support state and regional economic growth (§ 679.560(a)(5)). Describe how this aligns with the State of Illinois' vision and principles (page 1).

Region 9's strategic vision to coordinate workforce development activities with local and regional economic development strategies and develop career pathways and sector work-based strategies to fill skills gaps and create a competitive workforce directly aligns with the State of Illinois Workforce vision of the Unified State Plan. When companies look at our region for potential expansion, they cite the availability of talent to meet their needs as a key indicator of the region's promise. As companies are looking to expand in the St. Louis and Metro East area (which include the Illinois counties in Region 9), they often note the shortage of applicants with relevant knowledge and skills as a key barrier to growth. Meanwhile, we know the education and training is a differentiator for an individual. On average, the stronger your skillset, the higher your earning potential and chances for economic mobility. In March 2019, the St. Louis Regional Chamber released the "*Bridging the Talent Gap*" report. We know that our region's

success depends on our ability to address our workforce shortages with a specific emphasis on further advancing the skillset of our existing employee base. The report contains interesting findings about what employers consider to be key barriers to hiring and it touches on the value of increasing opportunities for employees to learn additional skills that will move them forward in their career. 260 HR professionals and business leaders completed the Bridging The Talent Gap Employer Survey and their responses provide an honest and objective window into the viewpoints of employers in St Louis and the surrounding Metro East. This report provides context — by summarizing how our region has responded — and focus — by revealing our community’s specific perspective on key issues concerning hiring challenges, skill gaps among the local labor pool, and the roles education and learning play in helping to address these issues to achieve community goals. Throughout this regional plan, examples are given of regional strategies that support each of the State’s guiding principles that, in turn, lay the groundwork of the six strategies of the Unified State Plan.

Economic development strategies that emerged in Region 9 discussions based on this report produced the following cluster categories that provide opportunities for Southwestern Illinois.

Heavy Industry

An emphasis on retaining the existing heavy industry within the region, especially steel manufacturing and associated industries, should be a priority. Loss of this industrial sector from the region would mean that the likelihood of its return would be minimal. Respondents indicated that an active strategy for retention should be developed for this sector.

Light Industry

Southwestern Illinois benefits from a motivated, capable and trained workforce. The region should seek to develop a strategy that will attract and/or facilitate the development of light manufacturing. Such an effort involves a strategy of linking existing heavy industrial installations to both existing and new light manufacturing operations.

Healthcare

Southwestern Illinois is home to several large, high quality health care facilities providing service to the region. It also has significant resources for future economic growth including: SIUE the Schools of Pharmacy, Dental Medicine and Nursing; at Southwestern Illinois College the School of Allied Health; at Lewis and Clark the Health Sciences Division; RN, LPN and Allied Health Programs at Kaskaskia College; and at McKendree University, the School of Nursing and Health Professions. Governor Pritzker has recently announced plans to fund a \$105 million health sciences complex at SIUE. The health sciences complex will provide modern classrooms, teaching and research laboratories, faculty offices, administrative spaces and student resource and study spaces. Completion is anticipated during fall 2023 or 2024. These resources are significant and have the potential to provide significant economic strength to the region.

Energy

Southwestern Illinois benefits from significant energy generation investments. These investments involve both traditional and new energy sources: the Phillips 66 Refinery in Wood River, the Ethanol Research Facility at SIUE, the existing ethanol plant at the America's Central Port, and the Prairie State Energy Campus near Marissa. Energy has the potential to be developed as a major resource in the economic development of the region.

Logistics / Transportation

The central location of Southwestern Illinois in the United States makes it a prime location for an expanded logistics/transportation hub. The region benefits from:

- The convergence of five major rail carriers for freight distribution. The Merchants Memorial Mississippi Rail Bridge crosses the Mississippi River between St. Louis, Missouri and Venice, Illinois in Madison County.
- An expansive interstate highway network with significant local infrastructure within Southwestern Illinois (I-255; five Mississippi River Bridges to St. Louis; I-70; I-64; I-55)
- Access to Mississippi River traffic through the America's Central Port and port facilities on the Kaskaskia River provides Southwestern Illinois with a link to international trade derived from the expansion of the Panama Canal and an expanded facility through the City of New Orleans.
- Southwestern Illinois benefits from three major airport facilities: St. Louis Downtown Airport in Cahokia; St. Louis Regional Airport in East Alton; and Mid-America St. Louis Airport that adjoins Scott Air Force Base
- Large tracts of land near these transportation assets for development of warehouse space such as the new Gateway TradePort south of 270 in Madison County. In Jersey County, the new Mid-America International Gateway Business Park on US 67 is being developed and should be ready for businesses sometime in 2022.

Southwestern Illinois is uniquely situated with significant existing resources to develop logistics as a major component in its future.

Agriculture

Agriculture is a significant element in the economy of Southwestern Illinois and will remain important in the foreseeable future. At the same time the potential for expanding the market for agricultural products provides an opportunity. Food manufacturing and the proximity of farms to ethanol plants are potential growth areas relating to agriculture.

B. Describe the local goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment) and goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on performance indicators (§ 677.155(a)(1)).

The strategic goals of the Southwestern Region 9 area to prepare an educated and skilled workforce that also achieve performance accountability are to:

- Develop curriculums that align with the state’s elementary and secondary education content standards which will specify what adult education learners should know and be able to do in the areas of reading, language arts, mathematics, and English language acquisition.
- Promote transition from adult education to postsecondary education and employment through career pathways by providing adult education instructional services that are contextually related to workforce training and the needs of employers.
- Assist immigrants and English language learners in (a) improving reading, writing, math, speaking, and comprehending the English language and (b) acquiring understanding of American government, individual freedom, and responsibilities of citizenship.
- Establish high quality professional development programs to enhance the instructional services provided by adult education providers.
- Operate established One-Stop centers for services to employers, with job seekers prepared to meet employer hiring needs.
- Promote educational attainment and credentials that meet employer hiring needs.
- Develop and support workforce strategies that respond to current economic conditions and specific regional and local needs, customizing services for specific employers.
- Proactively address future workforce needs.
- The community colleges are committed to improving methods to accurately track the employment of all completers and document the anecdotal data presently collected that demonstrates successfully obtaining a recognized academic credential. The credential will lead directly to employment in the field of study with employment continuing into the second and fourth quarter after exit. A valuable resource to find Illinois colleges that best fit a student’s educational priorities and career goals within the state is the website, *Illinois College2Career* at <https://www.ilcollege2career.com>.
- Further develop the existing pipeline to area middle and high schools so their usage of the Illinois Career Information System increases. The Junior version (grades 5-8) and Standard (grades 9-college) provide learning plans and portfolios that are portable to Illinois schools. Curriculum in all subject areas is included, with an emphasis on the required state standards on career investigation and planning.
- Continue to utilize and expand the usage of the Jobseeker version of the Career Information System in the Illinois Job Centers, where customers can receive staff assistance in establishing their portfolio career plan.

- Assist veterans who access services in the job centers to make career goals based on their interests, establish career plans utilizing all job center partner services and support including financial.
- Ensure that educational goals for persons with disabilities are appropriate and provide necessary support services for success.
- Actively engage students with disabilities while in secondary school to ensure smooth transition to post-secondary school and/or workforce.
- Kaskaskia College has an active organization called the South Central Illinois Growth Alliance (SCIGA) which is a five-county not-for-profit corporation offering tremendous opportunities for business and individuals. SCIGA is committed to establishing, promoting, maintaining and continually developing financial, industrial, and agricultural and tourism initiatives as well as other regional activities for the development, attraction, and retention of business, industries and the economic vitality of the region.

Title 1-B PY 2018-2019 Performance Goals

Performance Measurement	LWIA #22	LWIA #24
Adult Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter After Exit	72.0%	76%
Adult Employment Rate 4 th Quarter after Exit	65.0%	70%
Adult Median Earnings	\$5,460	\$3,500
Adult Credential Attainment	66.0%	63%
Dislocated Worker Employment Rate 2 nd Quarter After Exit	75.0%	77%
Dislocated Worker Employment Rate 4 th Quarter After Exit	62.0%	63%
Dislocated Worker Median Earnings	\$5,600	\$4,000
Dislocated Worker Credential Attainment	60.5%	52%
Youth Employment/Placement in Education Rate 2 nd Quarter After Exit	56.0%	50%
Youth Employment/Placement in Education Rate 4 th Quarter after Exit	55.0%	48%
Youth Credential Attainment	65.0%	72%

Regional Adult Education Performance Measures

National Reporting System – FY2020 Illinois Targets

MEASURE	FY2020 Targets
Educational Functioning Levels	
ABE Beginning Basic Education	51%
ABE intermediate Low	44%
ABE Intermediate High	37%
ASE Low	41%
ASE High	21%
ESL Beginning Literacy	55%
ESL Low Beginning	56%
ESL High Beginning	59%
ESL Intermediate Low	50%
ESL Intermediate High	47%
ESL Advanced	27%
Rolled-up Level Completion	46%

DRS Performance Measure: For the nine-county region, DRS must have 524 clients employed in competitive employment for 90 consecutive days over a one-year period.

C. Provide a description of the regional and local strategies that will achieve the vision and principles. This must include a description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local areas:

- **To facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations (§ 679.560(b)(3)(i));**

Outreach is conducted to employers posting job orders to develop awareness of recruitment assistance available from the One-Stop Centers which may include on-the-job training grant opportunities, facilities for job fairs, interviewing, or testing, and some level of candidate screening. Additional services are offered to employers to strengthen the workforce in the form of work-based learning: on-the-job training; incumbent worker training; paid work experience and apprenticeship opportunities.

The local One-Stop Centers in Region 9 provides the following services that also support the workforce system: assessment of hiring needs, customized recruiting, job-postings,

veteran recruiting, training grants for skilled, new and incumbent workers, soft-skills training, labor market information and space for hiring events.

- **To support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area (§ 679.560(b)(3)(ii));**

The two leading organizations representing EDR 9, St. Clair County Intergovernmental Grants Department – Workforce Development Group and Madison County Employment & Training, currently administer the WIOA grants as well as an existing Apprenticeship Expansion Grant. Both entities, as county departments, have been able to utilize the local government support and existing resources to effectively serve businesses throughout the region. This has enabled not only the administration of WIOA business services, but also the county (and state) incentives vital to not only retain businesses, but to help them thrive and expand. In addition, both organizations have led the formation and growth of the Regional Business Services Team. This team is dedicated to providing business services across EDR 9 and has grown to incorporate a Regional Apprenticeship Navigator, and the focus on work-based learning, including registered apprenticeships. All of this has led to strong relationships within our regional business community, which in turn has led to business “buy-in” and participation when it comes to projects such as the Apprenticeship Expansion Grant.

Both St. Clair County Intergovernmental Grants Department – Workforce Development Group and Madison County Employment & Training have greatly utilized their extensive partnerships when it comes to key stakeholders within EDR 9. Representatives from both organizations, including the Regional Apprenticeship Navigator, participate in numerous committees and workgroups connected to chambers of commerce, economic development organizations and social service agencies. This has been vital to serving the business community and also is critical to implementing the Talent Pipeline Management strategies throughout the region. These key relationships also allow the consortium to reach out to the harder serve populations in a much more cohesive fashion. In addition, both workforce development organizations serve as registered apprenticeship intermediaries and work in cooperation with the Regional Navigator to develop and grow new intermediaries.

The manufacturing sector has long been a mainstay of the Southwestern Illinois economy and is currently the top maturing industry. Each October for several years now, SWIC, at the Sam Wolf Granite City Campus, hosts “*Manufacturing Day-from Handmade to High Tech*”. Open to the public, attendees start the day at the SWIC Industrial Technology Center Open House, tour the SWIC advanced manufacturing facility, see demonstrations of cutting-edge technology, try their hand at virtual welding and meet more than 25 local

manufacturers. The event is presented in partnership with the Gene Haas Foundation, Granite City Economic Development Department, IMEC – Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center, Leadership Council Southwestern Illinois, Madison County Employment and Training, St. Clair County Intergovernmental Grants Department, and the Southwestern Madison County Chamber of Commerce.

During October 2019, Kaskaskia College, the South Central Illinois Growth Alliance (SCIGA) and members of the manufacturing industry joined together to open their doors to many high schools with the goal of promoting careers in the manufacturing industry. Tours of major manufacturers highlighted the manufacturing processes, as well as brought awareness to the vocational skills gap within the industry and highlighted the above-average wages and career opportunities available. This year was a very ambitious year for S.C.I.G.A. and the college as there were 6 days of tours in 5 cities with 10 high schools which included: Centralia High School, Breese High School, Mater Dei High School, Carlyle High School, Nashville High School, Okawville High School, Salem High School, Patoka High School, Vandalia High School and Okaw Vocational Center. Students gained insight on careers at each of the companies they toured. Students also heard presentations on careers in the vocational trades, including what the college has to offer, the cost, and the associated wages with the careers which are in high demand in our district.

- **To better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development (§ 679.560(b)(3)(iii));**

Our Regional Apprenticeship Navigator for Economic Development Region 9 is a member of the Local Workforce Investment Area 22 & Local Workforce Investment Area 24 Business Services Team (BST). Members of the BST meet and make contact with regional businesses. Members of the BST meet monthly. In an effort to reduce redundant business contacts, the BST developed a business contact protocol. The contact protocol sets forth that the first BST member making contact with a business will do an assessment of the business to determine the business' needs, then refer to the business the BST organization or other organization that can provided the resources to the business.

Training of the BST took place in March and April of 2019. The BST members were trained on the services that each member organization had available for businesses. In order to make sure all BST members are aware of contacts that are made, a communication system for business contacts was developed. When a BST member makes a business contact, an email with the business' name as the email subject is sent to all BST members via an Outlook group contact along with a brief summary of the contact

substance, person(s) contacted, and needs of the business. A follow up action is listed and a referral made if needed.

The Regional Apprenticeship Navigator regularly attends Chamber of Commerce meetings and events creating awareness and understanding on apprenticeships, Talent Pipeline Management strategies and work-based learning opportunities. The Navigator meets with the Regional Offices of Education and School Superintendents to create awareness and understanding on apprenticeships, Talent Pipeline Management strategies and work-based learning opportunities.

- **To strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs (§ 679.560(b)(3)(iv));**

Southwestern Region 9 has two one-stop centers, one full service in Belleville that has Unemployment Representatives on site to address questions, issues and assist with filing claims online. The other center in Wood River provides direct linkage, computers for self-service filing of claims and phone to call customer service 1-800#. All staff located in the centers refer customers for employment and training services.

- **To promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services (§ 679.560(b)(4));**

Region 9 participates in initiatives of the Small Business Development Center at SIUE and encourages customers in the One Stop Centers to explore additional opportunities for small business startup.

The SIUE Small Business Development Center (SIUE SBDC) is a service to the community supported by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, and Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE) School of Business.

SIUE operates two Small Business Development Centers and the International Trade Center. All Centers provide resources and information to Southwestern Illinois entrepreneurs, business owners, small business service providers, and the university community.

By assisting entrepreneurs and companies in defining their path to success, the SBDC network positively impacts the Southwestern Illinois Region by strengthening the business community, creating and retaining new jobs, and encouraging new investment. The SBDC enhances Southwestern Illinois's economic interests providing one-stop

assistance to individuals by means of advising, training, research, and advocacy for new ventures and existing small businesses. When appropriate, the SBDC strives to affiliate its ties to the Southwestern Illinois Region to support the goals and objectives of both the SIUE School of Business and the University at large.

- **To implement initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of regional employers (§ 679.560(b)(3)(v)).**

Our Regional Navigator is currently working with the regions high school career and technical education facilities and programs to develop partnerships with local businesses to develop apprenticeships and work-based learning opportunities. Some of these facilities and programs are in underserved areas and have a large portion of students that qualify under the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) eligibility requirements.

The Navigator gives presentations to local high school classes on apprenticeship and work-based learning opportunities that exist and how to connect with those opportunities. The Navigator educates on the employability skills necessary to get and retain employment and where to learn these skills to increase the student's chances at getting and retaining employment.

Our Regional Navigator is working with local businesses in target sectors to host site visit events for the area high school students to develop interest in the businesses and to develop interest in possible apprenticeships with the businesses. The Navigator is also working with local businesses to host events for the high school student's parents in order to get parental buy-in for possible apprenticeships.

The Navigator is working with the local high schools in an effort to get the schools to use the Illinois Career Information System (ICIS) to access the students in order to know what career cluster the student's assessment identifies. The goal is to identify the career cluster, find out what jobs contained in the cluster interest the students and provide contextualized instruction for the identified jobs.

The Navigator is on a committee to develop a yearly career fair for the St. Clair County high school career and technical education programs. The first career fair is set for March of 2020. The plan is to start with St. Clair County schools and to expand to include all of the schools in Economic Region 9.

The Navigator meets with all three community colleges in Region 9 to coordinate partnerships with the community colleges and the schools, businesses, and community-based organizations.

D. Describe regional strategies that will increase apprenticeship and other work-based learning opportunities.

Economic Development Region 9 Apprenticeship Consortium

Region 9 Apprenticeship Consortium has requested funding for several apprenticeship proposals over the past couple of months. The Economic Development Region 9 Apprenticeship Consortium has chosen the medical and manufacturing sectors for this work. Both sectors are highlighted in the Unified State Plan as well as the WIOA Regional Plan for EDR 9.

Working as the Intermediary with business partners SIHF Healthcare, Center Ethanol, Green Plains and the National Corn-to-Ethanol Research Center at SIUE, the Consortium will create and deliver Department of Labor (DOL) approved activities for twenty-seven WIOA eligible participants.

Working as the Navigator, the Consortium will immediately pursue formal DOL approved apprenticeships for business partners Antolin Nashville, and Gulfstream to provide a new approach for recruitment and training. Both Antolin and Gulfstream have expressed their strong desire to be part of this opportunity. West Star Aviation, located in East Alton, Illinois, plans to utilize the Department of Labor approved Airframe and Power Plant Mechanic apprenticeship program. West Star plans to place 3 employees into the program with more to be added in the future. The educational provider will be Southwestern Illinois College (SWIC) and the educational component will be an Associate in Applied Science Degree for Aviation Maintenance Technology. The classroom portion is 75 credit hours in length and the anticipated length of the apprenticeship is 8,000 hours. EDR 9 is in an enviable position in that all of the WIOA Core partners and many of our non-core partners have already come together to create a formal Regional Business Services team. This team holds regular meetings and has been granted access to and trained on the Illinois Job Link system as a means to operate cohesively under one system. Based on conversations with other Local Workforce Area Directors, this is unique to our region. By utilizing WIOA partners in our navigation plan, the Consortium will be able to leverage existing relationships, address eligibility and capacity issues and concerns, and cover a much broader geographical region. The Consortium expects that this model will vastly increase awareness and the rewards of apprenticeships to both employers and job seekers.

Approach 1: The Navigator will educate employers and the public on the use of apprenticeships and Talent Pipeline Management strategies to produce a skilled workforce using WIOA eligible individuals and individuals with barriers. The Navigator will educate employers and the public

on diversity and inclusion in the workforce. The Navigator will educate employers and the public on using the Illinois Career Pathways Dictionary in order to standardize language and understanding and using the Illinois Career Information System to access student's career pathways.

The Navigator's anticipated goal under this project is to develop apprenticeships for the occupations of Certified Medical Assistants, Aviation Maintenance Technicians, Avionics Maintenance Technicians, Industrial Maintenance Technicians, Diesel and Auto Mechanics, Welders, Process Operators and other occupations as the need is identified by Labor Market Information. Every effort will be made to identify non-traditional occupations across all sectors.

The Navigator will develop the Community Colleges, Regional Offices of Education, Employer Associations, Employers and regional high schools as intermediaries and provide technical and resource support in order to increase the number of effective intermediaries available to grow apprenticeships in Region 9.

Approach 2: It is proposed that the existing regional intermediary network will support, coordinate and manage registered apprenticeship programs in the areas of Medical Assisting and Process Operations. These programs are already developed and active, therefore providing the opportunity for immediate implementation and expansion.

It is anticipated that during the lifecycle of Program Approach #2, the goal of approximately 27 newly registered apprentices will be as follows: Medical Assisting -24 and Process Operations - 3. As these programs continue to be successful, it is planned that the Apprenticeship Grant Program Approach #2 will pay for the classroom training costs while On-The-Job Training costs will be covered by a combination of business contribution, WIOA funding and any unexpended apprenticeship grant funds.

Approach 3: It is proposed that new intermediaries will be formally registered and supported while newer start up apprenticeship programs and apprentices will be developed and managed in the areas of Diesel Mechanics, Auto Truck and Trailer Repair, Industrial Manufacturing Technology, Aviation and Welding as well as other possible high and medium growth sector initiatives. In addition, there will be collaboration between the intermediaries and long-term talent pipeline initiatives involving the development of a high school vocational school as well as the Big Step Construction Trades Development Model. The goal is to serve up to 21 registered apprentices under Program Approach #3.

Bridging the Talent Gap Report

A main reason employer survey respondents experience difficulty in hiring include the lack of the right skills for the job (48%). 80% of respondents report that their business does not provide any support for work-based learning. 65% of respondents indicated that they did not currently work with a local education provider to assess skill gaps. It is our hope that this report has

opened the eyes of businesses that they may need to work with the local one-stops in our region for assistance with work-based learning opportunities, including apprenticeships.

Southwestern Illinois Regional Apprenticeship Meeting

Madison County Employment & Training, St. Clair County Intergovernmental Grants Department and the City of Collinsville held a Southwestern Illinois Regional Apprenticeship Meeting from 9 a.m. to noon Thursday, January 23, 2020 at Collinsville's Gateway Convention Center. The meeting featured presentations and panel discussions exploring the apprenticeship opportunities in our local area. Area business leaders, training providers, workforce professionals, and apprentices explained the benefits of implementing work-based learning, and attendees learned more about growing apprenticeship opportunities as part of building a sustainable talent pipeline in our region.

Regional Navigator

When a business decides that a registered apprenticeship is a tool of value to the business, the Navigator helps navigate the business through the apprenticeship process from start to implementation of the apprenticeship. The Navigator facilitates the contact between the business and the intermediary and provides any needed technical assistance to the business. An example of technical assistance to a business is sitting down with a business to analyze talent flows to see where their current talent came from.

The Regional Navigator assists pre-apprenticeship participants in transitioning to registered apprenticeships, for example, identifying to participants the requisites necessary to enter a registered apprenticeship.

Our Navigator has held meetings with businesses, educational providers from secondary and post-secondary education to use apprenticeships as a part of the Talent Pipeline Management System. The Navigator will continue to look at program offerings by the high school career and technical education programs and make recommendations on how to strengthen those programs to achieve better results with more recognized credentialing.

E. Describe initiatives to shorten the time from credential to employment and address how the area will work with the education system to begin putting training opportunities in place to meet this strategy.

Digital Badging. SIUE has partnered with Acclaim to provide professionals with a digital version of their earned credentials. Digital badges can be used in email signatures or digital resumes, and on social media sites such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter. This digital image contains verified metadata that describes the professional's qualifications and the process required to earn them. SIUE currently offers 10 STEM badges and on-line certificates.

Talent Pipeline Management (as defined in Section F) is another initiative to shorten the time from credential to employment. Strategy 2 (Engage in Demand Planning) addresses the quantity, location, and time in which talent needs to be ready for critical jobs identified by the employer collaborative. Strategy 3 (Communicate Competency & Credential Requirements) addresses the final missing piece – quality – by addressing the competency, credentialing, and other hiring requirements for these jobs. Employers need to work together to create a common language in describing skills, competencies, credentials, and other hiring requirements. Through a shared language, employers in a collaborative can better communicate similarities and differences in hiring requirements to education and workforce partners. Strategy 3 takeaways are to understand the importance of better communicating competency and credentialing requirements to fill critical positions, to identify opportunities for employers to better communicate and prioritize hiring requirements, and how to combine and share the results of employer demand planning and communicating competency and credentialing requirements

F. Describe the steps that will be taken to support the state’s efforts to align and integrate education, workforce and economic development including:

- **Fostering the improvement and expansion of employer-driven regional sector partnerships to increase the focus on critical in-demand occupations in key sectors that are the engine of economic growth for the state and its regions.**
Region 9 employs the initiative, Talent Pipeline Management (TPM), developed by the US Chamber of Commerce Foundation. TPM is a demand-driven, employer-led approach to close the skills gap that builds talent supply chains aligned to dynamic business needs. The demands of today’s economy require a strategic alignment between classroom and career, so through this approach, employers play an expanded leadership role as “end-customers” of our education and training systems. TPM is a workforce strategy for our time that can meet the needs of an ever-changing business environment.
- **Expanding career pathway opportunities through more accelerated and work-based training and align and integrate programs of study leading to industry-recognized credentials and improved employment and earnings.**

In order to enhance the current WIOA services to expand career pathways, integrate programs of study to lead to industry-recognized credentials, and improve job opportunities and earnings, Region 9 will plan and develop the following steps for a results-driven workforce development system:

- Engage employers and use labor market intelligence in determining providing training and hiring options in their industry sector.
- Develop and implement earn-and-learn job opportunities with employers through on-the-job training, internships and apprenticeships.

- Measure and evaluate employment gained by program enrollees and earnings outcomes by target enrollment group.
 - Promote stepping stones for employment from entry, to advancement, to career.
 - Promote competency attainment in industry sectors with training skills.
- **Expanding career services and opportunities for populations facing multiple barriers to close the gap in educational attainment and economic advancement through career pathways and improved career services and expansion of bridge programs.**
 - Perkins V- reauthorized in 2019 as Strengthening Career and Technical Education Act for the 21st Century, develop more fully the academic knowledge and technical and employability skills of secondary and postsecondary students enrolled in CTE programs of study, increasing the employment opportunities for special populations. Perkins V staff have a presence in all three community colleges in our region.
 - DRS provides a program entitled "Community College Initiative". If a customer meets the approval criteria, he/she will be funded by DRS to begin and obtain an Associate's Degree. Bachelor's and Master's Degree programs may also be funded if approval criteria are met.
 - DRS will also provide reasonable accommodations for the disabled individual if necessary.
 - SWIC and L&C provides career services not only to students and graduates through their Career Services Department but has dedicated staff at the WIOA Career Services offices on the Belleville Campus, Granite City Campus and at the East St. Louis Higher Education Center performing general career services to student and the general public. In addition, by providing a single point of contact for WIOA students, the students receive additional job search assistance and counseling during their program of study.
 - SIUE's Career Development Center incorporates career counseling and development with co-ops and internships in a comprehensive program to prepare students to enter the world of work. Serving SIUE students and alumni, they provide a starting point to access valuable career information. Through comprehensive services, their experienced staff helps students and alumni connect with employers and find the resources they need. They also work with employers seeking to network with and hire SIUE students and alumni.
 - Kaskaskia College Career Services recently hired a new employee specifically to strengthen career pathways. An example of an Industrial Technology career pathway that has been developed with Vandalia High School is as follows:

Vandalia High dual credit classes, KC Foundation After School Program and KC Jumpstart Program-→Kaskaskia College industrial technology classes→Enter employment as a maintenance technician, engineering technician, installer or industrial sales and service technician OR Transfer pathway to a 2 + 2 university agreement as SIUC.

- Monthly meetings of the Regional ROE Transition Planning Committee and monthly meetings of the Area Planning Committee will continue with program information sharing and updates on educational opportunities and bridge programs.
 - The IDES Labor Market Economist continues to provide training to DRS vocational rehabilitation counselors on the Illinois Career Information System, including the portfolio feature, to assist clients with planning and achieving career goals after investigating and comparing available options.
 - The IDES Labor Market Economist continues to provide training to WIOA staff in the job centers on the Illinois Career Information System, including Career Plan.
 - Region 9 seeks to develop a stronger pipeline to juvenile and adult probation, both state and federal for enhanced career and employment services.
 - The Hire the Future program provides presentations on career/job readiness to youth probationers.
 - The Re-Entry Employment Service Program (RESP) helps people with criminal records find a job. RESP also provides job readiness workshops and services.
 - Madison County Employment and Training presents job readiness workshops to residents at the Madison County Housing Authority.
 - Connection to Success offers a holistic approach to pathways to employment. Services include coaching, weekly group sessions, employment support, mentoring, personal and professional development, transportation and used vehicles.
 - Madison County Employment and Training hosted a Ready to Work Madison County Expungement Day on September 27, 2019. Pro Bono lawyers, Madison County Circuit Clerk's Office, Madison County judges, Land of Lincoln Legal Aid and volunteers from the L&C paralegal program assisted 80 people. As of this date, a total of 25 felons have had their records either sealed or expunged. Plans are in place to hold a second event during spring 2020.
- **Expanding information for employers and job-seekers to access services by improving the Illinois public-private data infrastructure to support the alignment and integration of economic development, workforce development and education initiatives for supporting sector partnerships and career pathways.**

- Burning Glass Analytics
- IDES EI&A are working in partnership with DCEO on a WDQI grant that is using the administrative data research facility to establish a program evaluation capability for Title I and Title III (RESEA).