

Regional Plan Addendum

LWDBs in an identified planning region will have to work together to formulate a regional plan as an addendum to each of their local plans. Once identified, planning regions will remain in effect if federal and state requirements for planning regions continue to be met. With each submission of the regional plan to the state, the respective LWDBs and chief local elected official(s) will certify that the requirements to be identified as a planning region continue to be met. The regional plan must include:

(1) Names of the LWDBs that comprise the planning area. ([Administrative Policy 123: Regional Planning Area Identification and Requirements](#))

The Local Workforce Development Areas that comprise the Northwest Florida Workforce Collective (WIOA Regional Planning Area) include:

- Region 1- CareerSource Escarosa (Escambia and Santa Rosa Counties),
- Region 2-CareerSource Okaloosa Walton (Okaloosa and Walton Counties),
- Region 3- CareerSource Chipola (Washington, Holmes, Liberty, Jackson, and Calhoun Counties), and
- Region 4-CareerSource Gulf Coast (Bay, Gulf, Franklin Counties).
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(2) Description of how the planning region shares a single labor market, shares a common economic development area, and possesses federal and non-federal resources, including appropriate education and training institutions, to administer activities under WIOA, subtitle B. ([Administrative Policy 123: Regional Planning Area Identification and Requirements](#))

The area that comprises the Northwest Florida Workforce Collective (or RPA) share industries from aerospace to logistics to advanced manufacturing. The western communities have more concentrated industries in financial services, information technology, and advanced manufacturing, such as chemicals, medical technology, and turbine manufacturing. Eastern communities in the Florida Panhandle have a higher concentration in logistics, textile manufacturing, forest products manufacturing, and ship and boat building. The LWDBs that make up the twelve-county planning region share a regional economic development area supported by Florida's Great Northwest, a regional economic development organization, and work closely with county economic development organizations as well as Opportunity Florida, a multi-county economic development organization that serves rural counties throughout Northwest Florida. Please see the list below:

NORTHWEST FLORIDA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

- Bay Economic Development Alliance
- Calhoun County Chamber of Commerce
- One Okaloosa EDC
- Franklin County
- FloridaWest (Escambia County)
- Gulf County Economic Development Coalition
- Holmes County Development Commission
- Jackson County Economic Development Committee
- Liberty County Chamber of Commerce
- Opportunity Florida
- Santa Rosa Economic Development Office
- Walton County EDA
- Washington County EDC

The Northwest Florida Workforce Collective is made up of local workforce development boards, each of which possesses federal and non-federal resources and works closely with several education and training institutions that provide training for WIOA-sponsored participants.

Additionally, each local board within the planning region ensures that all funding used for training purposes complies with WIOA, subtitle B. Training providers utilized by the RPA currently are listed below:

NFWC Training Providers

Escarosa	Applied Technology Academy
Escarosa	CDL of AL
Escarosa	Coastal Alabama Community College
Escarosa	Fortis Institute
Escarosa	George Stone Technical College
Escarosa	Innovak of Florida, Inc. dba My IT Future Institute
Escarosa	Locklin Technical College
Escarosa	Pensacola State College
Escarosa	Reid State Technical College
Escarosa	Security Services Training Institute
Escarosa	Sky Warrior
Escarosa	Truck Driver Institute
Escarosa	University of West Florida
Okaloosa Walton	Applied Technology Academy
Okaloosa Walton	Emerald Coast Technical College
Okaloosa Walton	FleetForce Truck Driving School at NW Florida State College
Okaloosa Walton	Fortis Institute (Fortis-Pensacola)
Okaloosa Walton	My IT Future Institute
Okaloosa Walton	Northwest Florida State College
Okaloosa Walton	Okaloosa Technical College
Okaloosa Walton	Truck Driver Institute (TDI – Milton FL)
Okaloosa Walton	Tampa Truck Driving School (TTDS – Tampa FL)
Okaloosa Walton	University of West Florida
Okaloosa Walton	LT3 Academy Apprenticeships
Okaloosa Walton	FleetForce Truck Driver Training Apprenticeship
Okaloosa Walton	Reliance Test & Technology Apprenticeship
Chipola	Chipola College
Chipola	Fleet Force
Chipola	Florida Panhandle Technical College
Chipola	Gulf Coast State College
Chipola	Lively Technical Center
Chipola	Wallace College
Gulf Coast	Gulf Coast State College
Gulf Coast	Tom P. Haney Technical College
Gulf Coast	Florida Panhandle Technical College
Gulf Coast	Tallahassee State College
Gulf Coast	SkillStorm
Gulf Coast	FleetForce Truck Driving School at NWFL State College

For further labor market information please click on the link for [NFWC Data Book](#).

(3) Analysis of regional and local population centers, commuting patterns, industrial composition, location quotients, labor force conditions, and geographic boundaries.
[\(Administrative Policy 123: Regional Planning Area Identification and Requirements\)](#)

Data was compiled and analyzed by Ernst and Young and provided to early implementer regional planning areas. Please visit the link to the [NFWC Data Book](#).

(4) Description of the established regional service strategies using cooperative service delivery agreements that include but are not limited to:

As a newly formed RPA, staff for the NFWC have been working to assess and align processes, standards, and service strategies. At this date we have inventoried the income eligibility for WIOA adults, ITA caps, Key Industry Sectors, Supportive Services Offerings, Technology Tools, WIOA Youth Incentives and Additional Barriers Definitions, Self Sufficiency Definitions, and Underemployment Definitions for Dislocated Workers. While we have worked diligently to inventory and begin to analyze regional data, we have not yet established strategies for how to combine and streamline our processes.

(a) Consistent eligibility standards and enrollment processes.

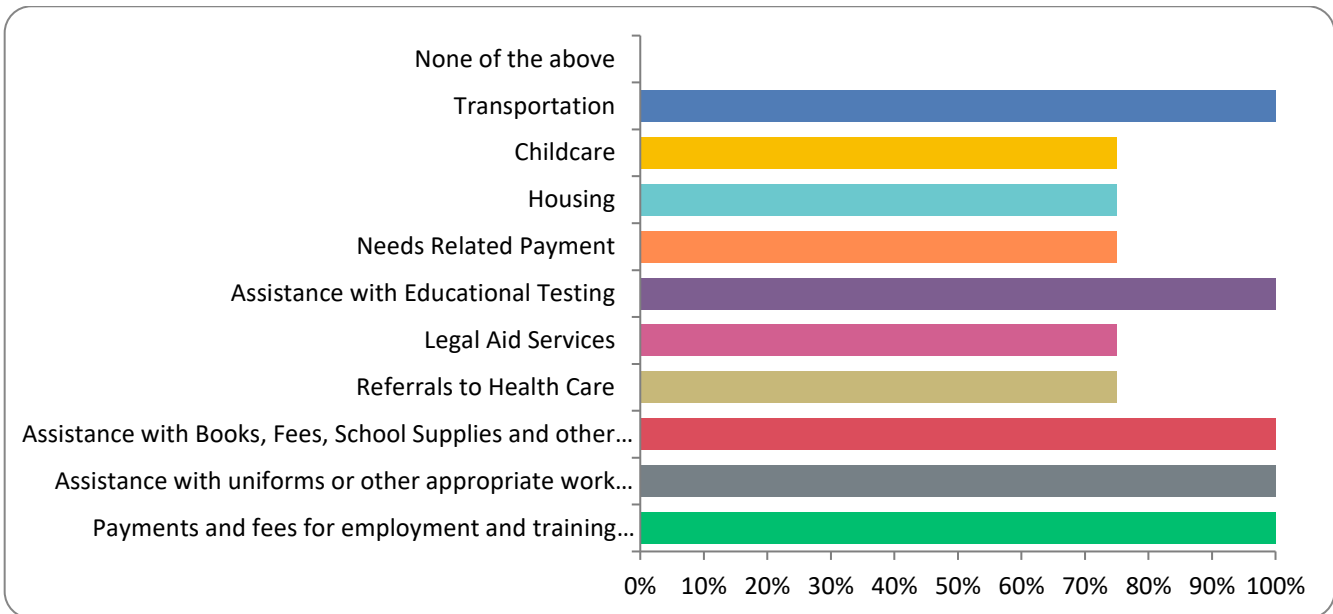
While our eligibility standards vary at this time, the variances are allowed by WIOA law and are determined by each LWDB based on factors such as funding, the local economy, and employment data; it is the goal of the NFWC to adopt the same eligibility standards as possible whenever feasible. Our enrollment processes currently are aligned and follow the same flow. It is important to note that our processes are driven by a goal to assist as many individuals with WIOA and other workforce services as funding will allow (in terms of training programs). Please click on the [link for customer flow/enrollment](#).

(b) Common training and coordination of supportive service offerings, as appropriate.

The NFWC utilizes common training providers and supports the use of training providers across the regional planning area when appropriate (outside of local workforce board boundaries). NFWC boards utilize the ETPL applications of each board for local approval of the ETPL. In terms of supportive services, we have inventoried the following supportive services by LWDB as a starting point to align these services more closely. Our next step is to establish consistency wherever possible. Additionally, the NFWC has already begun sharing staff training with the RPA. Developing training, providing training, and developing policies and procedural instructions are all time-consuming and staff-heavy. We plan to coordinate as much of this work as possible for efficient use of our limited staff time. We believe that RPA-wide training will promote more sharing of best practices and provide not only better-trained staff but also better customer outcomes.

All four regions offer the following supportive services: transportation; assistance with educational testing; Payments and fees for employment and training-related applications, tests, and certifications; Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, and payments and fees for employment and training related application, tests, and certifications.

Three of the four regions also offer the following supportive services: Childcare, Housing assistance, Needs Related Payments, Legal Aid Services, and Referrals to Healthcare. Please note that CareerSource Chipola does not offer these supportive services.



As a newly formed RPA, we are working to align our supportive services offerings more closely, by information sharing regarding the utilization of common community resources such as United Way partner agencies, churches, homeless organizations, shelters, substance disorder rehabilitation facilities, transportation disadvantaged agencies, and other partners. In the rural counties of our RPA, supportive services, and the availability of services through other partners. The availability of both transportation and childcare is challenging across the entire RPA, more so in workforce regions 2-4.

(c) Common technology tools and sharing of data within tools outside of Employ Florida.

Across the planning area, LWDBs use a variety of data tools and technology platforms to support both staff and customers. As an RPA we have completed an inventory of the current technology tools/platforms that each LWDB utilizes to prioritize programs where consolidating to one contract as an RPA might have value. We are also aware that the state is working toward this effort and last December passed the Statewide Standardization of Tools and Services policy. The NFWC will continue to review subscriptions and vendor contracts to look for efficiencies, while CareerSource Florida also analyzes this information to do the same on a statewide level. Data sharing is already common in our RPA, as we share reporting formats, performance data, and tools where possible.

Technology and Service Platforms by LWDB

	CareerSource Escarosa	CareerSource Okaloosa Walton	CareerSource Chipola	CareerSource Gulf Coast
Document Storage	EF, OneDrive, SharePoint	Atlas	Atlas	EF, One Drive, Sharepoint
Forms	Microsoft Forms, Formstack, NITRO Sign	Atlas, Right Signature	Docu-sign Atlas Adobe	Adobe Professional

LMI	EF, Plans for Lightcast	Jobs EQ via Opportunity Florida and EF	Jobs EQ via Opportunity Florida and EF	FloridaJobs.org, Opportunity Florida, FGNW
Accounting	MIP	MIP and Gazelle for client services	MIP	MIP
Marketing	Constant Contact, Canva free version	Canva, Constant Contact and free Social Media platforms	Canva	Canva, Survey Monkey, Mail Chimp, Adobe Creative Suite
IT Software	Trend Micro Antivirus	Microsoft 365, Adobe, and Barracuda	Citrix, Office 365, Barracuda, CarbonBlack (protection, KnowBe4, Docusi	MS Office 365, Deep Freeze, Barracuda Firewall, Absolute Resiliency, Symantec Antivirus, Freshdesk
Programmatic Tools	Work Number, Salesforce	Pathful Explorer, Traitify, Fast Forward, IBM Talent Management System, Skills First Optimal Resume, Career Edge(Youth), Virtual Job Shadowing	Employ Florida, OSST, FL COMM tools, Aspiring Minds	Acuity Scheduling, IXL Learning, Talevation, Udemy, WorkNumber, Pathful Explorer, Zoom, Indeed Resume Subscription, Unite Us

(5) Description of sector strategies for existing and emerging in-demand sectors or occupations. (20 CFR 679.560(a)(1)(ii))

The planning region will support the convening of regional employers through our close Economic Development partners.

(a) How will the planning region convene or support the convening of regional employers, foundations, institutions, and other stakeholders to create or maintain sector partnerships?

The NFWC will support Florida’s Great Northwest’s strategic initiative Northwest Florida FORWARD 2.0 which will include business and industry, education, economic development and chamber organizations, infrastructure officials, and government and elected officials. These regional stakeholders will come together to:

- Revisit the strategies and tactics from FORWARD 1.0 in 2017; create a new, clear plan for a path to greater success for each of the five areas of focus:
- Complete a SWOT for the region’s current economic landscape using similar regional and local (including similar MSA sizes and rural counties) comparisons to conduct a gap analysis and to identify opportunities for increased competitiveness.
- Conduct a SWOT based on a review of relevant cluster initiatives already in progress locally and at the state level and an understanding of state, national, and global trends.
- Gather new data related to Northwest Florida’s target industry sectors and identify gaps in areas such as talent, site size/acreage, building square footage needs, logistics, etc. needed in those sectors.

- FGNW will serve in the role of regional convener for the plan, not full implementor.
- Assist in a workshop to pull regional players together in the five focus areas to gain buy-in and chart the path forward.

(b) Identify and describe the established and active sector partnerships in the planning region.

Current sector partnerships are not well defined but operate informally with support from local and regional economic development and chamber organizations. Connections made between like industries have been, in large part, made by local and regional economic development organizations or education-related advisory councils. There have been past attempts to build industry sector partnerships around apprenticeship/training programs within each LWDA, but those have not been sustainable. It is anticipated that the Florida Forward 2.0 will help revive and create stronger industry sector partnerships.

(6) Description of the collection and analysis of regional labor market data (in conjunction with the state).

Labor market and industry data were compiled and provided by Ernst and Young as well as Florida’s Great Northwest. The NFWC is comprised of three Core-Based Metro statistical areas which are Panama City, Pensacola-Ferry Pass-Brent, and Crestview-Fort Walton Beach-Destin across a twelve-county geography. The RPA boasts a labor force of approximately 530,000 individuals, with an average unemployment rate of 3.5 percent (June 2024 LAUS data). Commuting patterns indicate a fluid workforce that commutes between the twelve counties of the RPA and beyond. Targeted Sector industries that LWDA 1 and 2 share are engineering, information technology, and logistics. LWDA 1 has more financial services than LWDA 2, which is predominantly due to the Navy Federal’s operations campus in Pensacola. Secondly, LWDAs 3 and 4 have more ship and boat building than LWDA 2 from manufacturers such as Eastern Shipbuilding, in Panama City, and Xtreme Boats, in Bonifay. Florida’s targeted sectors shared by LWDAs 2 and 4 are logistics, ship and boat manufacturing, and professional services. The Florida target sector industries that LWDAs 2 and 3 share are scientific research, professional services, financial services, and logistics. Region 3’s target industry sector industries have more manufacturing and logistics, while LWDA 4 has more professional services and chemical manufacturing. For example, LWDA 1 has more metropolitan statistical areas that have a higher concentration of corporate headquarters, such as LandrumHR and AppRiver, than traditional rural communities.

For more information regarding labor market data, please click on the link for [Employment and Unemployment Data/Map](#) and/or the [NFWC Data Book](#).

(7) Description of the planning region’s coordination of administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate.

Currently, the four LWDB’s do not coordinate or pool administrative resources. In the past, there have been shared positions within the RPA, but through attrition, those arrangements were not sustainable. While cost pooling is not currently being coordinated, it is something that regional partners are interested in for efficiency where possible in the future. There is still much to work out for these situations to come to fruition, including indirect cost rates and how those factors into operations and combined grant submission efforts and even for “group” procurement of needed services/goods. The NFWC believes that coordinating administrative cost arrangements is important for the future of the RPA and continues to work toward this goal.

(8) Description of the planning region’s coordination of transportation and other

supportive services, as appropriate.

All LWDAs in the RPA provide financial for transportation as a supportive service if there is no other agency that can assist, although public transportation options are extremely limited within the RPA area. There are no common transportation vendors throughout the RPA, and all LWDAs in the RPA provide gas cards, reimburse for mileage, or by public transportation passes in order to ensure that customers have a way to get to critical workforce-related appointments, training, or their work-based training site. Some regions have also invested in electric scooters or bicycles as a source of transportation for customers.

(a) What regional organizations currently provide or could provide supportive services?

The only RPA wide transportation service is the transportation disadvantaged program.

(b) What policies and procedures will be established to promote coordination of supportive services delivery?

The NFWC has already begun to compare and inventory policies and procedures in order to coordinate a variety of functions including the provision of supportive services. Our goal is to offer the same types of services that are procedurally aligned, funds permitting. Our supportive service policies are already similar, and staff are working to align them even further.

(9) Description of the planning region's coordination of services with regional economic development services and providers.

All the counties within the Northwest Florida Workforce Collective are also represented by the regional economic development organization Florida's Great Northwest (FGNW). In addition, all four local areas within the NFWC are members of FGNW. One representative from LWDBs also serves as a member of the FGNW executive committee per the organization's by-laws. Eight of the twelve counties represented in the NFWC are part of Florida's first Governor designated Rural Area of Opportunity. These eight counties are also represented by the rural development organization Opportunity Florida. Three of the four local areas are members of Opportunity Florida and participate in the organization. Opportunity Florida and FGNW work together, and share resources, leads, and strategic initiatives. Both FGNW and Opportunity Florida have public and private membership and welcome active participation from the local boards. The NFWC and the two economic development organizations have strong connections. The Executive Director for FGNW is housed in the same office space as CareerSource Gulf Coast. CareerSource Chipola serves as the management staff for Opportunity Florida.

(10) Description of the planning region's establishment of an agreement concerning how the planning region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with FloridaCommerce on local levels of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures described in WIOA Sec. 116(c) for local areas or the planning region.

The four local areas within the NFWC all have an extensive history of positive performance. Upon release of the Statistical Adjustment by FloridaCommerce, each of the local areas have agreed to have selected management-level staff work together to evaluate regional performance levels and develop a counterproposal, if deemed necessary, to performance levels proposed by FloridaCommerce. Any proposal from the Consortium will take into consideration changes in both local and regional economies that may impact future performance.

(11) Description of the planning region’s strategy to prepare an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment) to meet the needs of the employers.

The Northwest Florida Workforce Collective (NFWC) will employ an objective and coherent strategy to prepare an educated and skilled workforce to meet the needs of employers located in its planning regions.

NFWC recognizes that the major need of regional businesses is to more readily find available qualified, educated, and skilled individuals who are equipped with the worker readiness skills necessary to meet their business needs. NFWC with the help of the partner Florida’s Great Northwest (FGNW) is adopting eight guideposts to support the goal of a vibrant talent pipeline that includes all types of workers.

Education, nor any other single organization can address the talent pipeline as a single entity. On the contrary, to move the needle in a positive direction to solving the education and skills gaps concerns, NFWC considers in its strategy some of the peripheral elements that may negatively impact a jobseeker, worker, and a youth or young adults’ ability to attain the education or training they need. When planning for education or training to fill workforce vacancies, NFWC will include the guideposts as a reference when making decisions on the allocation of limited resources.

Peripheral elements considered in the guideposts include transportation, housing, childcare, etc. These elements can directly impact an individual’s ability to attain their education or training goal and must be considered. Job seekers continue to be challenged by a lack of affordable housing, transportation, and childcare. Despite notable improvements over time, access to affordable and responsive transportation remains an obstacle for many who are transitioning into or reentering the workforce. NFWC will continue to advocate for and expand its partnership with applicable local community entities to move forward with solutions to these barriers to employment. The development of the guideposts takes all of these issues into consideration as part of developing and sustaining a talent pipeline.

GUIDEPOST 1: Early Work Experience

Early exposure to the world of work through summer and year-round employment, internships, and service opportunities is a key predictor of consistent employment in adulthood. Programs that provide these opportunities can help prepare youth and young adults for the workforce. Benefits include long-lasting career benefits, development of soft skills, exploration of career interests, improved financial literacy, and personal growth. The importance of early work experience in shaping a youth’s career trajectory and personal development should not be discounted.

GUIDEPOST 2: Education and Training

Access to educational and career pathways and jobs that allow youth and young adults to earn an income while they learn and build careers is crucial. Education and training are essential tools for closing occupational gaps. They provide individuals with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in their roles, foster loyalty and retention, and contribute to economic growth and equality.

GUIDEPOST 3: Address Systemic Barriers

It’s important to address systemic barriers that hinder an individual’s employment, such as lack of access to transportation, affordable childcare and gender inequality. Advocating for policies to

providing support for job seekers/workers entering non-traditional occupations via training can be beneficial. Addressing systemic barriers is crucial for creating a stronger talent pipeline and involves a multi-faceted approach that includes policy changes, data-driven decision-making, and targeted support for marginalized groups.

GUIDEPOST 4: Support for Disconnected Youth

Disconnection from school and work increases after high school. Therefore, targeted support for disconnected youth, including those not in school and without a post-secondary degree, can help improve their job prospects. These initiatives are designed to help disconnected youth overcome barriers and acquire the skills necessary to secure and maintain employment, thereby positively contributing to the labor market.

GUIDEPOST 5: Local Labor Market Trends

Understanding local labor market trends in the RPA is key. For instance, working closely with economic development partners to recognize emerging and growing industry sectors and the work-based, on-the-job, and training-based opportunities is key to providing awareness of these growing industries across the RPA.

GUIDEPOST 6: Workforce Development:

Workforce development is a key component of any successful strategy. Workforce development programs increase job satisfaction, operational efficiency, and innovative thinking. These programs also reduce turnover rates, improve productivity, and proactively solve problems as they arise. Workforce, education, and economic development partners should help the industry understand these types of programs and the results they yield. These programs may include job development or understanding accommodations for those with differing abilities.

GUIDEPOST 7: Collaboration with Local Employers

Collaborating with local employers to develop a business-focused talent pipeline is critical in order to ensure that the needs of businesses are understood. Aligning education and training programs according to employer needs is key to ensuring that education/training completers emerge ready to work.

GUIDEPOST 8: Support Services

Support services play a crucial role in workforce development providing comprehensive support services, such as career counseling, job placement assistance, transportation, and post-placement support, can help youth, young adults, the disabled and other job seekers overcome barriers to employment and succeed in the workforce. Support services in the workforce can lead to a more productive, diverse, and stable workforce, benefiting both the employees and the organization.

(12) Description of the local strategies, policies, and improvements to enhance consistency and coordination within the planning region and help streamline experiences for job seekers, workers, and businesses, allowing a more agile workforce system to better adapt to changing marketplace and consumer expectations.

The NFWC will meet at least four times a year to review local strategies, policies and identify improvements that will enhance consistency and coordination within the planning region to help streamline experiences for job seekers, workers, and businesses, allowing a more agile workforce system to better adapt to changing marketplace and consumer expectations. All meetings will focus on information sharing, reduction of duplication of services, and the cultivation of additional resources needed to facilitate a seamless service delivery system rather than an array of separate programs with separate processes. Additionally, board staff from the

LWDBs that make up the planning area have already begun meeting to implement a number of strategies and plan to bring teams together such as business services staff and JVSG staff to share best practices and for the development of new strategies such as a regional employer engagement plan.

The following initiatives and programs assist the NFWC in its ongoing plan for continuous improvement to provide workforce services in the best manner possible for those served throughout the NFWC region.

- A. Florida's Great Northwest—A regional economic development organization led by professional staff and visionary leaders focusing on enhancing the region's competitive position through industry diversification and job growth. All LWDBs of the NFWC planning region are members and rotate serving on the executive committee of the Board of Directors for Florida's Great Northwest.
- B. Education and Industry Consortium Strategic Policy—Requires each LWDB to create consortiums to ensure education and industry partners are discussing talent needs and education offerings as well as sharing information with the local workforce development board of directors.
- C. Business Services—Program established in the daily operations of each LWDB led by business and economic development professionals. Each LWDB has dedicated professionals to help businesses recruit, hire, train, and/or retrain individuals to meet their workforce needs.
- D. WIOA Core Partner's Meetings—Each LWDB meets with partners and agency representatives of the one-stop workforce system as a resource and referral guide for coordinating services. Collaboration with other agencies that provide support or other resources in the local area will continue to be ongoing. In alliance with representatives from the one-stop workforce system, these agencies will be invited to take an active part in our quarterly meetings to enhance awareness of all partners and local agencies of local resources that may serve as referral tools to meet customer needs.

Each local area has strong alliances with its WIOA partners, and those partnerships help guide discussions regarding services needed for jobseekers and other customers accessing services at the LWDB. Each WIOA core partner has a role in ensuring that the local area's workforce continues to meet the needs of the jobseekers and employers. One goal of WIOA is that the workforce system should continue to find ways to bridge the gap between education and employment. The NFWC periodically reviews each local area's outreach activities in employer/business services, work-based learning and customized training offerings to further increase collaboration across the regional area.

Key stakeholders in economic development connect employers, educators, and workforce representatives frequently. The NFWC will continue to rely on our shared regional economic development group, Florida's Great Northwest, and utilize labor market and educational data in coordination with local data to inform and guide strategic workforce development decisions. Further, the working regional collaborative group, NFWC, will facilitate unprecedented interagency cooperation and coordination in designing the agility needed to promote the best future for the NFWC's regional area and workforce development system.

(13) Description of the steps that will be taken to support the state's efforts to align and integrate education, workforce, and economic development, including:

(a) 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 planning region.

LWDAs are uniquely positioned to support and implement targeted industry sectors with our partners in education and economic development. The NFWC has a vast array of state, regional, and local partners to assist the RPA in determining which sectors are the most viable and to review and provide input into sector-based initiatives, and the best mix of services including recruitment, hiring, training, work-based training and the use of registered apprenticeships. Our partners in regional and local economic development programs also provide opportunities to work with prospective employers who are seeking to locate in the region as well as existing employers who may be expanding or struggling.

(b) Expanding career pathway opportunities through more accelerated and work-based training and aligning and integrating programs of study leading to industry-recognized credentials and improved employment and earnings.

The deep and long-serving connections between the local area members of the Northwest Florida Workforce Collective (the Collective) and two regional private sector-driven economic development organizations combined with strong local ties to private sector employers place the NFWC in an excellent position to forecast employer needs well into the future. Appropriate management-level staff will share efforts within the NFWC and then share lessons learned with their local staff and board of directors.

When appropriate, representatives from members of the NFWC will work together in seeking funding to expand opportunities for work-based training aligned with industry needs. A key focus of regional training initiatives will be to develop opportunities providing those trained with industry-recognized credentials that provide the individual with additional employment options with their current employer, or within targeted industry sectors.

(c) Expanding career services and opportunities for populations facing multiple barriers to educational attainment and economic advancement.

The NFWC member regions have a long-standing history of serving populations facing multiple barriers to both educational attainment and economic advancement. Geographically, the NFWC is made up of roughly two thirds of RPA consisting of rural communities. There are limited services and many extraordinary barriers to employment; the two largest barriers being transportation and childcare. Furthermore, rural communities have fewer service agencies overall. Often LWDBs are the one-stop shop for all services with the exception of the health department. Our offices are located in the majority of the counties we serve, and if not with full-time office hours with staff that are on site at least one or two days per week. Our locations are often located in the heart of or near underserved communities and we partner with the few local organizations which can support those in need in order to help them become job or training ready. In our larger metro areas, we have comprehensive centers and staff equipped to assist those with an interest in training on site at the training location, at our office and/or virtually. As an RPA our Chief Operating Officers are meeting to review and share best practices on many workforce topics such as this one. While we believe we have fully expanded services and opportunities to populations with multiple barriers, we will continue to explore better ways to serve our most vulnerable populations.