

# GULF COAST WORKFORCE BOARD

## 2017- 2020

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## LOCAL PLAN

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# FOREWORD

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The Gulf Coast Workforce Board and its operating affiliate, Workforce Solutions are the public workforce system for the 13-county Houston-Galveston area in southeast Texas. We help employers meet their workforce needs and individuals build careers so both can compete in the global economy.

As a public entity, Workforce Solutions is most effective when we can rely on the participation of all stakeholders in the regional economy. This means that we work closely with schools, colleges, local city and county governments, non-profits, and social service providers, as well as the business community, to bring people together and focus on our shared economic needs. To represent these many groups, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board is made up of dedicated individuals from both the public and private sectors who volunteer their time and expertise to help set the direction for how Workforce Solutions carries out its mission.

Our volunteer Board members along with the hard-working professional staff of Workforce Solutions, are tasked with implementing a local, data-driven plan for developing our region's pool of human talent to meet local employment needs. To guarantee that we are fulfilling our area's obligations to the Texas Workforce Commission under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, this Local Plan examines our estimated economic needs through 2020.

Through its 2017-2020 Local Plan, the Board:

- Projects labor market conditions and identifies the needs for skilled workers
- Sets the strategic direction for Workforce Solutions and the Board's investments to meet the region's needs for an educated and skilled workforce
- Describes how Workforce Solutions is organized to deliver high-quality, valued service for the region's employers and people
- Ensures the public workforce system is open and accessible to its customers and accountable to funders, local elected officials and stakeholders

The full report draws on a wide variety of data points, metrics and programming, and we encourage you to read it for a fuller understanding of our efforts.

But first, it's important to begin with a few basic facts about how our Board envisions the next 10 years for local employment and some of our plans for meeting the challenges and opportunities that we see developing for our 13-county area.

## **What does the future hold?**

By 2024, total population in the region will reach 7,674,819. The Houston-Galveston area will continue to become more and more diverse, with 35.4% Anglo, 37.6% Hispanic, 16.8% African American, and 7.5% Asian. Although the percentage of the workforce over the age of 55 will increase to 23.8%, the region will remain largely young with just over half of the population under the age of 35.

Total employment in the region will grow to 3,821,030 – an increase of 22.4% from 2014. Key industries in the region will continue to include oil and gas exploration and production, construction, manufacturing, health care, education, and business and technical services.

We estimate that even before 2024, 58.8% of all jobs in the region will require education or training beyond the high school level and that the majority of these will be “middle skill” jobs. In 2024, employers will need 1.3 million workers in middle skill positions – those that require some post-secondary education and/or on-the-job training. But make no mistake, these are the crucial positions that will need to be filled in order to make our workforce competitive in a global environment. Wages for these jobs currently average \$23.79 per hour – significantly above the region's median wage.

The region's employers will continue to need almost 925,000 individuals for highly skilled work. These are the jobs that require education at or beyond a bachelor's degree level and usually some level of work experience: physicians, nurses, pharmacists, engineers of all types, accountants and researchers for example. These are the highest paying jobs – with current average wages at \$47.66 per hour.

There will also be some 1.8 million lower-skilled jobs in 2024.

In its local plan, the Board targets the key regional industries and the high-skill and middle-skill jobs which will be most in need for those industries, while presenting information on the lower-skilled jobs as well.

## **How will the Board and Workforce Solutions respond to these challenges?**

The Board's mission is to help employers meet their human resource needs and individuals build careers, so both can compete in the global economy. To accomplish this goal, Workforce Solutions will focus on providing services to both employers and members of the workforce to fill our region's economic needs with highly trained individuals.

Our focus on employers is to help them find the right people for the right job, and expand their share of the regional economy by growing their workforce, capacity and productivity. For our area's workers, we provide assistance with training, education and professional development to help people find meaningful employment and make progress in their career. This commitment to service is how we intend to meet the needs of our dynamic economic future.

## **What does the report show?**

The Local Plan lays out the broad workforce and human resources needs for the region's future, and helps us make decisions about how we use our system and resources to meet those needs. These forecasts show us where our workforce development efforts should be focused and tell us what kinds of jobs and industries will be our region's key occupations and employers. This information is critical to educators, communities and businesses because it explains how we will need to evolve and adapt our workforce to changing economic demands.

What we see most clearly is the continued need for employees capable of filling skilled technical professions. These are the occupations that will come to dominate our employment needs and provide the manpower that businesses need to grow and succeed. Technical skill jobs are found across the chief industries of the Texas Gulf Coast region, but what they have in common are requirements for additional training and education beyond high school.

This means that Workforce Solutions will share pertinent information with educators, parents and students about career exploration and what steps young people need to be taking now so they are prepared for the jobs of tomorrow. Collectively, we need to focus our efforts on making sure that tomorrow's job candidates are equipped with the skills and knowledge they will need.

Our region has seen a strong recovery overall in terms of employment. In November of 2018, there were fewer unemployed individuals than prior to the start of the most recent local downturn related to falling oil prices; however, employment in oil and gas-related occupations has not recovered to levels seen prior to the downturn. Additionally, some stability was achieved with respect to oil prices, but fluctuations are still a reality. Due to the uncertainty this causes in the labor market, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board will continue to monitor trends and offer services where appropriate.

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board and our Workforce Solutions team are dedicated to growing our region's economic footprint by helping businesses reach their full human resources potential. Even as economic challenges arise and are ultimately overcome, we pride ourselves on the work that we do, and we look forward to continuing to serve Gulf Coast businesses and their employees into the future.

# PART A: STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

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## PART A: STRATEGIC ELEMENTS

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1. **A description of the Board’s strategic vision to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency. The description must include:**
  - a. goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment; and
  - b. goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on performance indicators described in WIOA §116(b)(2)(A).

### The Board’s Vision

Beginning in September of 2018, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board is in the process of updating its strategic plan. Below is the most current draft (as of December 2018):

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board is accountable for leading and governing the regional workforce system in the 13-county Gulf Coast region of Texas. It is the one and only workforce board in the region and one of its primary responsibilities is strategic planning.

The greatest challenge for us is setting the direction and focus for all workforce activities in the region, regardless of how they are funded, and to use our limited resources to leverage the larger system and achieve Board-established results. Moving the bigger system would be impossible without a strategic plan that clearly describes and precisely quantifies what results the Board expects the regional workforce system to achieve.

The Board has been engaged in a strategic planning process for several years. In 2003, we developed statements of our core values, mission and vision that explain what Board members value most, why it exists as a board, and where it wants to be at some point in the future. The Board developed results statements for the regional workforce system, both that which it directly controls and for the larger system. The Board’s strategic plan is a tool for managing the regional workforce system. Board members and staff use it to drive the regional workforce system toward the four results statements.

*The Gulf Coast workforce system is a regional network of business, education, labor, government, and community organizations serving the City of Houston and the 13-county Gulf Coast region of Texas.*

THE GULF COAST WORKFORCE BOARD  
*Employer Driven and People Powered*

Strategic Plan 2019 – 2023

<p><b>PURPOSE</b>  <i>(Why We Exist)</i></p>	<p>To keep our region a great place to do business, work, and live</p>
<p><b>MISSION</b>  <i>(What Makes Us Different)</i></p>	<p>We elevate the economic and human potential of the Gulf Coast region by anticipating and adapting to the evolution of work and personalizing our approach to fulfilling the diverse needs of the businesses we serve.</p>
<p><b>VISION</b>  <i>(The Future We Aspire To)</i></p>	<p>Our region attracts and retains the best employers, affords everyone the dignity of a job, remains competitive to the global economy – and all within it are thriving.</p>
<p><b>VALUES &amp; BEHAVIORS</b>  <i>(Our Strongly Held Beliefs)</i></p>	<p>We are employer-driven</p> <p>We care passionately</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for others</li> <li>• Inspire hope</li> <li>• Fuel progress</li> </ul>
<p><b>VALUES &amp; BEHAVIORS</b>  <i>(Continued)</i></p>	<p>We take responsibilities seriously</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be accountable</li> <li>• Follow up and follow through</li> <li>• Drive results</li> </ul> <p>We imagine the possibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek multiple perspectives</li> <li>• Bring fresh thinking</li> <li>• Engage one another in making a difference</li> </ul>

**RESULTS**  
*(The Difference  
We Will  
Make)*

1. More Competitive Employers
2. A Better-Educated Workforce
3. More and Better Jobs
4. Higher Incomes

**MEASURES,  
BASELINES,  
AND TARGETS**  
*(How We Will  
Measure  
Progress  
Toward  
Achieving  
Results)*

For the Regional Workforce System:

***Education Credentials***

- 84 percent of the region's population 25 years and older will hold an education credential
- 39 percent of the region's population 25 years and older will hold a post-secondary degree
- 24 percent of those pursuing an education credential will earn one

***Job Creation***

- 3.23 million individuals will be employed in the region, reflecting the addition of 254,202 jobs created since 2018

For Workforce Solutions:

***Market Share***

- 31,500 region's employers will use Workforce Solutions

***Customer Loyalty***

- 65 percent of employers using Workforce Solutions will be repeat customers

***Education Credentials***

- 76 percent of individual customers pursuing an education credential will earn one

***Job Creation***

- 3,500 new jobs will be created as a direct result of Workforce Solutions' partnering with other business organizations

**MEASURES, BASELINES,  
AND TARGETS**  
*(continued)*

***Employment***

— 78 percent of individual customers will be employed after leaving Workforce Solutions

***Earnings***

— 37 percent of individual customers leaving Workforce Solutions will have earnings gains of at least 20 percent

**STRATEGIES**  
*(How We Will Achieve Results)*

We help employers meet their human resource needs and people build careers, so both can compete in the global economy, by:

1. Building, maintaining, and continually improving a high-quality, value-add service delivery system for employers and people
2. Providing skilled workers for employers in critical industries
3. Contributing to high-quality, life-long learning for individuals
4. Delivering accurate and timely career and labor market data
5. Using our resources to leverage the larger system to achieve Board-established results
6. Meeting the requirements of our funding sources

We worked out a framework for quantifying progress toward Board-established results – measures, baselines, annual and long-range targets for both the Board controlled activities and the larger system. Together, this framework established a policy structure governing the regional workforce system, and clearly laid out the expectations for the system. The Workforce Board Strategic Planning Committee and staff annually review performance on strategic metrics. More importantly, the Board and staff analyze gaps between performance and targets. Do strategies align with the goals? Where are the opportunities to improve operational efficiency? What factors are affecting performance? Based on this analysis, we may adjust strategies, change procedures, revise (or eliminate) metrics and reset targets.

In the table below, are the metrics and long-term goals for both the Board-controlled and the larger workforce system through 2018.

Result #1 More Competitive Employers

<b>For Workforce Solutions</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	
Number of the region's employers who use Workforce Solutions	25,147	25,452	22,000	22,000	23,000	Target
	24,907	27,292	23,591	19,903	29,378	Actual
Percentage of the region's employers using Workforce Solutions as repeat customers	58%	62%	60%	60%	60%	Target
	56.80%	61.50%	56.00%	51.20%	69.90%	Actual

Result #2 A Better-Educated Workforce

<b>For the Regional Workforce System</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	
Percentage of the region's population (25 years and older) holding an education credential	80.00%	80.00%	81.00%	82.00%	82.00%	Target
	81.42%	81.40%	81.79%	82.33%	82.67%	Actual
Percentage of the region's population (25 years and older) holding a post-secondary degree	35.00%	35.00%	37.00%	37.00%	38.00%	Target
	35.78%	35.85%	36.64%	37.41%	38.18%	Actual
Percentage of those pursuing an education credential who earn one	21.00%	21.00%	22.00%	22.00%	23.00%	Target
	21.20%	21.58%	21.97%	22.65%	21.89%	Actual
Percentage of students enrolled in the 9th through 12th grades earning a high school diploma	21.00%	21.00%	21.00%	21.00%	21.00%	Target
	21.31%	21.01%	21.19%	21.23%	21.53%	Actual

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	
Percentage of those enrolled in adult basic education who earn a High School Equivalency (HSE, formerly known as GED)	79%	79%	79%	79%	79%	Target
	69.55%	40.81%	46.58%	50.48%	51.62%	Actual
Percentage of students enrolled in post-secondary institutions earning a certificate or degree	18.00%	18.00%	19.00%	20.00%	21.00%	Target
	18.94%	19.58%	19.95%	21.17%	21.45%	Actual
Percentage of students earning post-secondary certificates or degrees who hold credentials in fields preparing them for jobs in high-skill, high-growth occupations targeted by the Gulf Coast Workforce Board	32.00%	32.50%	34.50%	35.00%	35.50%	Target
	31.00%	31.50%	31.20%	34.10%		Actual
Total number of students earning a post-secondary degree or certificate up to and including Associate's degrees	31,382	31,925	34,467	37,222	40,210	Target
	31,382	31,925	34,252	37,936	39,204	Actual
<b>For Workforce Solutions</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	
Percentage of resident customers pursuing an education credential who earn one	73%	70%	72%	74%	74%	Target
	51.70%	70.10%	74.20%	63.90%	74.90%	Actual
Percentage of resident customers enrolled in post-secondary education who earn certificate/degree	82%	83%	84%	84%	85%	Target
	54.50%	83.50%	83.50%	71.50%	76.30%	Actual

Result # 3 More and Better Jobs - Job Creation

<b>For the Regional Workforce System</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	
Total number of jobs	2.75M	2.81M	2.87M	2.93M	2.99M	Target
	2,830,717	2,926,788	2,929,287	2,926,471	2,978,863	Actual

<b>For Workforce Solutions</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	
Number of new jobs created as a direct result of Workforce Solutions' partnering with other business organizations	2,700	2,800	3,000	3,200	3,300	Target
	2,865	2,446	928	2,726	3,079	Actual

Percentage of new jobs created with employers in industries targeted by the Gulf Coast Workforce Board as a direct result of Workforce Solutions' partnerships	75%	75%	75%	75%	75%	Target
	62.30%	64.80%	64.20%	6.70%	21.60%	Actual

Percentage of new jobs created in high-skill, high-growth occupations targeted by the Gulf Coast Workforce Board as a direct result of Workforce Solutions' partnerships with employers	45%	45%	45%	45%	45%	Target
	52.30%	57.00%	50.30%	2.50%	1.60%	Actual

Result # 3 More and Better Jobs – Employment

<b>For the Regional Workforce System</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	
Percentage of those employed who are working for employers in industries targeted by the Gulf Coast Workforce Board	27.50%	27.70%	28.30%	28.40%	28.60%	Target
	25.92%	25.24%	24.54%			Actual

Percentage of those employed who are working in high-skill, high-growth occupations targeted by the Gulf Coast Workforce Board	19.30%	19.40%	16.80%	16.90%	16.90%	Target
	18.12%					Actual

<b>For Workforce Solutions</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	
Percentage of resident customers employed after leaving Workforce Solutions	72%	73%	75%	76%	76%	Target

	73.30%	78.10%	80.30%	77.30%	76.30%	Actual
Percent of resident customers unemployed at entry who are employed after leaving Workforce Solutions	70%	71%	73%	74%	74%	Target
	70.80%	75.80%	78.40%	75.70%	74.60%	Actual
Percentage of resident customers employed after leaving Workforce Solutions, also employed in both consecutive quarters	81%	81%	82%	82%	83%	Target
	80.50%	81.30%	80.70%	79.20%	79.90%	Actual
Percentage of resident customers employed in the quarter beginning services from Workforce Solutions	62%	62%	63%	64%	65%	Target
	65.20%	71.90%	71.30%	68.30%	67.80%	Actual

Result # 4 Higher Incomes

<b>For Workforce Solutions</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	
Percentage of resident customers with earnings gains of at least 20 percent after leaving Workforce Solutions	35%	35%	36%	36%	37%	Target
	33.60%	33.80%	33.40%	28.40%	28.00%	Actual
Percentage of resident customers employed with earnings gains after leaving Workforce Solutions	44%	44%	45%	45%	46%	Target
	42.70%	43.90%	43.70%	36.80%	36.70%	Actual

**Result #1 Competitive Employers**

<b>For Workforce Solutions</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Number of the region’s employers who use Workforce Solutions	27,367	28,500	29,500	30,500	31,500

Percentage of the region's employers using Workforce Solutions as repeat customers	60%	62%	63%	64%	65%
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## Result #2 An Educated Workforce

<b>For the Regional Workforce System</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Percentage of the region's population (25 years and older) holding an education credential	83.00%	83.00%	83.00%	84.00%	84.00%

Percentage of the region's population (25 years and older) holding a post-secondary degree	38.00%	38.00%	38.00%	39.00%	39.00%
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Percentage of those pursuing an education credential who earn one	24.00%	24.00%	24.00%	24.00%	24.00%
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	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Percentage of students enrolled in the 9th through 12th grades earning a high school diploma	23.00%	23.00%	23.00%	23.00%	23.00%

Percentage of those pursuing a high school equivalency who earn one.	79%	79%	79%	79%	79%
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Percentage of students enrolled in post-secondary institutions earning a certificate or degree	23.00%	23.00%	24.00%	24.00%	24.00%
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Percentage of students earning post-secondary certificates or degrees who hold credentials in fields preparing them for jobs in high-skill, high-growth occupations targeted by the Gulf Coast Workforce Board	38.00%	39.00%	39.00%	40.00%	40.00%
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Total number of students earning a post-secondary degree or certificate up to and including Associate's degrees	42,825	45,679	48,532	51,385	54,239
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<b>For Workforce Solutions</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Percentage of customers pursuing an education credential who earn one	74%	75%	75%	76%	76%

Percentage of customers enrolled in post-secondary education who earn certificate/degree	85%	85%	85%	86%	86%
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### Result # 3 More and Better Jobs

<b>For the Regional Workforce System</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Total number of jobs	3,029,703	3,080,544	3,131,384	3,182,225	3,233,065

<b>For Workforce Solutions</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Number of new jobs created as a direct result of Workforce Solutions' partnering with other business organizations	3,300	3,300	3,400	3,400	3,500

Percentage of new jobs created with employers in industries targeted by the Gulf Coast Workforce Board as a direct result of Workforce Solutions' partnerships	60%	63%	67%	72%	75%
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	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Percentage of new jobs created in high-skill, high-growth occupations targeted by the Gulf Coast Workforce Board as a direct result of Workforce Solutions' partnerships with employers	45%	45%	45%	45%	45%

### Result # 3 More and Better Jobs

<b>For the Regional Workforce System*</b>	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of jobs occurring in those industries targeted by the Gulf Coast Workforce Board	≥1,304,205	≥1,304,205	≥1,304,205	≥1,304,205	≥1,304,205

Number of jobs in high-skill, high-growth occupations targeted by the Gulf Coast Workforce Board	≥ 615,170	≥ 615,170	≥ 615,170	≥ 615,170	≥ 615,170
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<b>For Workforce Solutions</b>	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Percentage of individuals employed after leaving Workforce Solutions	76%	77%	77%	78%	78%

Percent of individuals unemployed at entry who are employed after leaving Workforce Solutions	75%	75%	75%	76%	76%
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	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Percentage of individuals employed after leaving Workforce Solutions, also employed in both consecutive quarters	83%	83%	83%	83%	83%
Percentage of individuals employed in the quarter beginning services from Workforce Solutions	68%	68%	68%	68%	70%

### Result # 4 Higher Incomes

<b>For Workforce Solutions</b>	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Percentage of individuals with earnings gains of at least 20 percent after leaving Workforce Solutions	37%	37%	37%	37%	37%
Percentage of individuals employed with earnings gains after leaving Workforce Solutions	46%	46%	46%	46%	46%

For 2018, the Board adopted 13 measures and set performance targets for 2018:

<b>More Competitive Employers</b>	Market Share - (Oct. 2017 - Sept. 2018)	23,000
	Customer Loyalty - (Oct. 2017 - Sept. 2018)	60%
<b>Higher Incomes</b>	Exiters with Earnings Gains of at least 20%	37%
	Exiters employed in the 1st Qtr After Exit with Earnings Gains	76%
<b>More and Better Jobs</b>	New jobs created as a direct result of partnering with other business organizations	3,300
	New jobs created with employers in industries targeted by the Gulf Coast Workforce Board as a direct result of partnerships	75%
	New jobs created in high-skill occupations targeted by the Gulf Coast Workforce Board as a direct result of partnerships	45%
	Customers employed in the 1st Qtr After Exit	76%
	Customers, unemployed at entrance, employed in the 1st Qtr After Exit	74%
	Number of customers employed in 2nd and 3rd quarters after exit	83%
	Customers employed in the entrance quarter	65%
<b>A Better Educated Workforce</b>	Customers pursuing Education Credential that achieve one by quarter after exit	74%
	Customers enrolled in post-secondary who earn certificate or degree by quarter after exit	85%

In addition, there will be 19 measures Contracted by the State.

<b>Contracted with the State</b>	# of Employers Receiving Workforce Assistance	
	Employed Q2 Post Exit - Adult	75%
	Employed Q2 Post Exit - DW	79%
	Employed Q2 Post Exit - Youth	70%
	Employed Q4 Post Exit - Adult	72%
	Employed Q4 Post Exit - DW	84%
	Employed Q4 Post Exit - Youth	72%
	Employed/Enrolled Q2 Post Exit - All Participants	69%
	Employed/Enrolled Q2-Q4 Post Exit - All Participants	84%
	Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit - Adult	\$4,850
	Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit - DW	\$7,408
	Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit - All Participants	\$4,513
	Credential Rate - Adult	74%
	Credential Rate - DW	69%
	Credential Rate - Youth	41%
	Credential Rate - All Participants	60%
	Claimant Reemployment w/in 10 Weeks	56.3%
	Average Kids Served Per Day - Discretionary At-Risk	29,388
	Choices Full Work Rate (Oct. 2016 - Sept. 2017)	53%

We also track the following measures:

<b>Tracked Measures</b>	Total Customers Served	N/A
	Average Monthly Traffic	N/A
	Job Openings Filled – Problems with State report prevents us from tracking this	N/A
	Job Postings Filled – Problems with State report prevents us from tracking this	N/A
	Customers Directly Placed	20,000

**2. A description of the Board’s strategy to work with the entities carrying out the core programs and with the required partners to align resources available to the local area, to achieve the vision and goals.**

**Programs**

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board proposes to align our administration of the below programs with the WIOA Texas Combined State Plan.

- The Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs
- The Wagner-Peyser Employment Service (ES) program, including the Agricultural Outreach Plan
- The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program
- The Vocational Rehabilitation program
- The Senior Community Service Employment Program

Currently, the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) has oversight authority for all of the aforementioned programs. The programs discussed in this plan reflect only a portion of the programs managed by the Gulf Coast Workforce Board. Through the integrated workforce system in Texas, the GCWB also manages several other programs administered by TWC:

- Choices [the employment program for recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)]
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T)
- Child Care and Development Block Grant Funds/Child Care Development Funds (CCDBG/CCDF)
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)

**Partners**

The Gulf Coast region is rich in workforce development partners. We have ten community colleges systems, more than a dozen university campuses, numerous economic development and business organizations, a host of state and local agencies, and a wide variety of community and faith-based organizations. Together, these institutions represent a rich infrastructure for the Gulf Coast workforce system.

With our partners, we provide a wide range of service to employer and individual customers. On the resident side, community and faith-based organizations provide mentoring, life skills training, adult basic education, English as a second language, child care, transportation, and other work support service. Some of these organizations are paid vendors for our system while many others work informally with Workforce Solutions jointly assisting customers.

Workforce Solutions has an excellent relationship with our community college partners. The colleges provide educational programs leading to degrees and technical certificates, adult education and English as second language instruction, and other training. They work with the Board in developing customized training for employers, and consult with us in developing proposals related to workforce training. The colleges in the area are valuable partners in developing industry-based initiatives to address workforce issues in the region.

The region's major universities have a role in the workforce system, and are likely to have a greater one in the future as the Board's industry-based work continues and expands. The universities help to contribute to the diversification of our economy in the Gulf Coast Region..

The region's 76 districts are key partners in addressing many of the long-term shortages of skilled workers in our region. The Board has an existing relationship with many school districts; many career offices work directly with middle and high schools in their communities. The career offices are charged with providing service to young people in their schools. In addition to serving individual youth, many of whom are out of school, the Board continues to work with schools broadly to provide good labor market information to schools, parents and young people. We continue to expand and improve our labor market information and career planning products which include the High Skill, High Growth Guide, Focus on Industry and Occupation profiles, and When I Grow Up. Our goal is to support schools in their efforts to reduce drop-out rates, target resources to prepare youth for the good jobs of the future, and provide both parents and students information they can use in selecting course work and career opportunities. The Board's Education Committee provides guidance and oversight, and is fully committed to assisting schools in producing more graduates with the skills employers want.

Economic development organizations are key partners in our region. In many cases, the Board is a member

of these organizations. In other cases, such as our industry groups, the economic development organizations are key members of Board-sponsored projects. We work together in identifying opportunities for the region to grow good jobs, and to help develop solutions to barriers to growth, such as the need for improved schools. The Board's strategic plan includes a measure of the degree to which we are involved in economic development efforts leading to new or retained jobs. In general, each partner we work with pays for the service and staff the organization normally provides. For example, we may have a memorandum of understanding to work with a community-based organization to coordinate providing service to customers. We agree to make cross-referrals for customers with each partner paying for service they deliver to each customer.

There are exceptions to this general policy. Some of our partners are either vendors for Workforce Solutions or the Board has procured the organization to provide specialized service. In these cases, we pay for the partner organization to provide service, either by individual referral or through cost-reimbursement contracts.

The Board enjoys excellent working relationships with its partners, especially core partners such as the colleges, the adult education community, and economic development entities.

### **Vocational Rehabilitation Services**

The Texas Workforce Commission's Vocational Rehabilitation Services (formerly the Department of Assistive Rehabilitation Services, or DARS) is the new State funded program that assists individuals with disabilities in obtaining employment. People with disabilities represent a growing market segment in the U.S., so counting individuals with disabilities among employees can help businesses better understand and meet the needs of this expanding customer base. In addition, hiring workers with disabilities could mean tax breaks.

On September 1, 2016, Vocational Rehabilitation Services were transferred from DARS to TWC, in accordance with Senate Bill (SB) 208, 84th Texas Legislature, Regular Session (2015). The GCWB is working with TWC to insure a smooth transition and integrate TWC's Vocational Rehabilitation Services into current Workforce Solutions' offices.

The Workforce Solutions' Navigator team and career offices work with Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors with Texas Workforce Solutions Vocational Rehabilitation Services to help connect those with disabilities with services offered through the local career office. Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors also arrange to meet customers in the local career offices.

## Adult Education and Literacy

In September 2014 the Gulf Coast Workforce Board began administering the public adult education and literacy funds in our 13-county region.

Adult education and literacy providers offer English language, mathematics, reading, and writing instruction to help students acquire the skills needed to earn a high school equivalency, enter college or career training and/ or succeed in the workforce.

While some classes may charge a small, nominal fee (less than \$20) most adult education and literacy services are free to adult learners. Service is also available to young people who have dropped out of high school and have not earned an equivalency diploma.

The Gulf Coast Adult Education Consortium served a total of 22,028 customers in ESL, Adult Basic and Secondary Education, Career Pathways and Transitions courses during the period beginning July 1, 2017 and ending June 30,2018. Notably, 1,544 customers were enrolled in a Career Pathways course. Career Pathways courses are uniquely designed to meet the workforce needs of employers and to enable customers to secure industry relevant certification and obtain or retain employment in in-demand occupations. These courses may involve integrated education and training (IET), which is concurrent enrollment of customers in Adult Education and workforce training, workplace literacy, or work-based training in collaboration with employers.

## Senior Community Services Employment Programs

The Board participates as a host agency providing a work site for eligible SCSEP customers whenever possible. Workforce Solutions offices provide work experience opportunities including job-specific training to SCSEP customers placed at a host office of Workforce Solutions. (SCSEP contract staff work directly with Workforce Solutions office managers to establish work site agreements and job duties.)

## Sharing Information with Partners

Here are some examples of how The Board shares information with partners.

- **Customer relationships** – Our employer and resident service staff have ongoing relationships with both our partners and customers. On the employer service side, business consultants, industry liaisons, and administrative staff maintain relationships with employers, economic development organizations staff, and schools. On the resident side, career office staff, particularly our greeters, resource room specialists, personal service representatives, financial aid specialist and employment counselors, work

with residents to ensure they have access to all the services they want and need.

- The Gulf Coast Workforce Board has a Regional Team made up of Navigators and Facilitators that go out in to the community to reach populations that might not be served in a local career office. The Regional Team works with our partners to conduct community-based job search seminars and workshops. These presentations are conducted outside the career office in schools, libraries, and a wide range of community based organizations.
- Staff work with our vendor network to provide information about our service and system. Grants management staff work with many of partners to ensure our system is working to maximize resources in the region and provide coordinated service to employers and individuals. Board staff provide support to partners in developing new projects and grant proposals. Staff work with partners to develop meaningful memoranda of understanding (MOU) by providing high quality labor market information and guiding partners in the development of programs that are the best fit for the Region.
- **Marketing** – The Board’s marketing plan is designed to share information about workforce service throughout the region. Our marketing plan includes the use of our website, [www.wrksolutions.com](http://www.wrksolutions.com), email blasts, targeted mailings, and special events.

### **Working with Education and Training Providers**

The Board has no difficulty in identifying organizations interested in providing education and training service to meet employer needs. The region’s ten community colleges, universities, and numerous private career schools are quite willing to work with us.

The Board uses the Workforce Commission’s online application and review process to maintain its list of approved vendors and educational programs. We provide information to organizations interested in becoming vendors at <http://www.wrksolutions.com/about/vendorapplications.html>. Workforce Solutions financial aid payment office assists organizations who want to become part of our network of providers. Staff answer provider questions and assist them in completing the process.

### **Working to Improve Early Education**

Through local match agreements, the Board coordinates with school districts and Head Start/Early Head Start providers to support and expand early education and care and to improve the quality and quantity of care available to working parents.

The Board will continue to support unique projects to enhance after school and year-around care. The projects include efforts to improve the quality of learning in a variety of early education situations through scholarships for quality training, pilot projects to increase teacher pay, and support of Texas Rising Star.

## 2015 Workforce Report Card

**The Board will produce an update to the Workforce Report Card in 2019 and will submit it as a revision at a later date.**

In February 2005, the Board produced the first Report Card as a tool to gauge the region's competitiveness in relation to similar metropolitan areas across the United States. Since then, the Board has produced four subsequent updates. The most recent Workforce Report Card, released in February 2016, also measures how the Houston-Galveston region fits into the larger global economy. To emphasize the continued importance of an educated and trained workforce, this Report Card featured a special focus section on education that discusses the full spectrum – from early education to post-secondary training and beyond. The report also includes recommendations for improvement in the regional education system as well as a full discussion of the regional comparison indicators.

The 2015 Workforce Report card can be found at: <http://www.wrksolutions.com/about-us/gulf-coast-workforce-board/report-card>.

### Report Card Regional Roundtable Discussions

In order to engage key stakeholders in communities across the region, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board hosted a series of local roundtable discussions designed to:

- Deepen relationships in each of the communities we serve
- Engage Workforce Board members in meaningful interactions with local leaders
- Create opportunities for both stakeholders and the people we serve to better understand key findings in the Report Card
- Illustrate the vital role of Workforce Solutions in the regional economy.

### Common Themes:

Although each event was unique and each community had its particular concerns, we noted the following common themes:

- Emphasize early childhood education. Opinions varied on specific issues, but there was consensus about the benefits of putting more emphasis on and investing more resources in early childhood education.
- Change perceptions about technical certifications and degrees. Participants noted a need to change the perception that pursuing technical careers requiring either a professional certificate or associate's degree is less valuable than obtaining a four-year bachelor's degree. Concerns were raised that there is not

enough emphasis or importance put on the value of obtaining the education and training necessary for technical careers.

- Build and expand connections between industry and education. There was widespread agreement about the need to better connect employers and educators, particularly in the areas of curriculum development and experiential learning opportunities. Educators, employers and others stressed the long-term value of apprenticeships, mentorships and other efforts that expose students to real-life workplace opportunities.
- Provide better career counseling for students. This included students in middle and high schools, with an emphasis on quality career exploration particularly in middle school.
- Teach essential skills. A number of concerns were raised that students coming out of high school are not equipped with the basic, essential skills necessary to obtain and keep jobs -- including communication, teamwork and critical thinking.
- Encourage parents' involvement. Round-table participants talked about how to encourage more parental involvement in their children's education, recognizing the obstacles that some working parents face.

We will continue to work with our community partners to address the concerns raised in the Report Card Round Table events and stand firm in our commitments presented in the 2015 Report Card.

### **Commitments:**

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board is committed to helping build a trained and educated workforce.

- For 2016, the Board has allocated over \$4 million to support early education and care through our contracts with Collaborative for Children and the Texas Association for the Education of Young Children.
- Through Workforce Solutions, we will provide support to nearly 23,000 low-income working families to help with their early education expenses.
- Workforce Solutions will continue to provide quality local labor market information in the form of our career planning resources for student, parents and educators available at [www.wrksolutions.com/careerplanning](http://www.wrksolutions.com/careerplanning).
- We will target outreach efforts to middle schools to increase awareness of the When I Grow Up career exploration curriculum for grades six through eight [www.wrksolutions.com/wigu](http://www.wrksolutions.com/wigu).
- We will continue to integrate adult education and literacy into the Workforce Solutions system and leverage over \$14 million in funding to help customers continue to post-secondary training or directly into a new or better job.
- We will work to increase awareness among employers on the benefits and opportunities to use

apprenticeships to develop a highly skilled workforce.

## **Community Partnerships**

In addition to working with our core partners, the GCWB outreaches to local community partners to seek their input and collaboration on special projects in order to enhance our administration of the core programs. Over the past year the GCWB has seen success across a broad range of community based projects.

### **THRIVE – Workforce Connector Project**

Through United Way THRIVE, families achieve financial stability by focusing on three key strategies: increasing income, building savings and acquiring assets.

As part of the THRIVE initiative, the Workforce Connector project blends the financial literacy resources of United Way THRIVE agencies with Workforce Solutions to provide a seamless service experience to customers by helping them access training, find employment and build financial stability.

In 2015, THRIVE agencies provided job readiness service to over 600 customers with nearly 300 finding employment and approximately 200 completing financial education classes.

In 2016, the model expanded to incorporate three additional partnerships, bringing the total to six career offices and six United Way agencies.

The GCWB also partnered with S&B Engineers and Constructors, the United Way, the Greater Houston Partnership, Harris County Department of Education and other community-based organizations to introduce women to craft construction occupations. 16 women started careers with S&B as they participated in four months of paid on-the-job training, to include hands-on skills development, classroom training, adult basic education, financial literacy, and preparation for NCCER construction core credential attainment.

### **Income Now**

The GCWB partnered with the Coalition for the Homeless and other homeless service providers to help individuals experiencing homelessness find employment.

Homeless provider employment counselors are stationed at the Workforce Solutions offices that have a higher volume of customers who experience homelessness. Similarly, Workforce Solutions employment counselors are also working at homeless shelter locations and provider sites

The GCWB expects the integration of the workforce and homeless service systems to lead to an improved service experience for people experiencing homelessness. By learning from our partner agencies, Workforce Solutions staff will be better prepared to provide employment assistance to those experiencing homelessness and partner agencies will better understand Workforce Solutions services and resources.

From the implementation date in 2015 to November 2016 the integrated approach has served over 700 customers experiencing homelessness with more than 200 finding employment.

### **Jobs Plus – Cuney Homes**

Jobs Plus is a pilot project among the Houston Housing Authority, Workforce Solutions and a number of various community partners to bring employment resources and support services onsite to housing communities. The initial pilot will take place at the Houston Housing Authority's Cuney Homes development, located in Houston's Third Ward.

Jobs Plus seeks to develop locally-based, job-driven approaches to increase earnings and advance employment outcomes for residents of public housing through work readiness, employer linkages, job placement, educational advancement, technology skills, and financial literacy.

Cuney Homes has converted an entire complex of apartment units into community space, which will house an onsite Workforce Solutions itinerant office, adult education classes, food pantry, clothes closet, mental health counseling, onsite childcare services and more. The idea is to utilize a place-based approach to not only make access to service convenient, but to also bring a diverse set of services, resources and community partners into one location to quickly overcome job readiness challenges and help people find employment.

Through the Jobs Plus project, Workforce Solutions has provided employment service to over 300 customers with more than 50 securing employment.

### **Houston Food Bank**

Many customers in our region are unemployed and face significant hurdles, such as food insecurity, when looking for work or training for a career. As a result, we have partnered with the Houston Food Bank to build awareness about Food Bank services and pantry locations as well as provide food support to eligible customers.

Food Bank staff began visiting career offices in Harris, Montgomery and Fort Bend counties to attend office huddles and meetings to provide Workforce Solutions staff information about Food Bank services, pantry locations, and special opportunities and initiatives.

Additionally, established the Houston Food Bank as a paid work experience site, where customers can develop skills in a variety of occupational areas to include, transportation and logistics, information technology, customer service, and food service.

We paired the Food Bank with the Income Now initiative and have provided work experience opportunities to over 60 individuals experiencing homelessness. Five of these customers secured full-time work at the Food Bank while others obtained work at other businesses utilizing the skills acquired during their work experience assignments at the Food Bank. We also connected nearly 20 young adult customers to paid work experience assignments at the Houston Food Bank.

The Houston Food Bank also administers its Food for Change program, which allows select agencies to provide high-dollar food scholarships to their eligible customers. These food scholarships typically equate to 60 pounds of food every two weeks. Customers who enroll in an education and training service with Workforce Solutions are eligible to receive the food scholarship. Many of our customers begin a training program, but are unable to complete it due to having to work to pay bills or provide food support for their family. By helping to address one of these critical issues, we believe that more customers will have an opportunity to successfully complete their training programs.

Workforce Solutions facilitators are also working with the Food Bank to develop onsite seminars, where staff will visit the Houston Food Bank periodically to offer Workforce 101 classes to Food Bank staff. These classes are designed to help outside organizations become more familiar with Workforce Solutions service to do a better job of connecting their customers to our system's resources and opportunities. Similarly, facilitators will also conduct onsite job readiness seminars for customers and Food Bank volunteers to help them find a job, keep a job or get a better job.

### **The Professional Academy for Career Exploration (PACE)**

The Professional Academy is an innovative year-round work experience and college and career readiness program. For the 2016 school year Workforce Solutions partnered with the City of Houston and Worthing High School to provide seniors at Worthing High School enrolled in a "Career Prep Co-op" class, rotating paid internships at the City of Houston in the professional fields of Public Administration, Finance, IT, and Healthcare. Over the course of the 2016-2017 school year and the following summer, these students are participating in year-round activities including skills training, work experience, on the job training, job shadowing and mentoring, career readiness and exploration, financial literacy training, and post-secondary preparation.

The goals of the PACE project are (1) to expose students to a variety of professional career pathways; (2)

encourage them to complete high school and pursue post-secondary opportunities; and (3) make informed decisions regarding major selections and career options.

### **The Greater Houston Workforce Development Group**

The Greater Houston Workforce Development Workgroup is a regional collaborative led by Greater Houston Partnership – UpSkill Houston, Gulf Coast Workforce Board and United Way of Greater Houston. The Greater Houston Workforce Development Workgroup aligns and improves workforce services in nonprofits by investing in meaningful partnerships with industry, education, and workforce organizations. They seek to meet the current and emerging needs of our businesses and local communities so all can thrive in our growing economy.

Throughout 2015 and 2016 multiple agencies across the Houston-Galveston Region worked together to develop a comprehensive Workforce Development Professional’s Guide with the goal of improving and standardizing workforce development procedures across the region.

A copy of the Workforce Development Professional’s Guide can be found at:

<https://www.unitedwayhouston.org/thrive/resources/workforce-development-workgroup>.

# ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS

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### 3. A regional analysis of the following:

- a. The economic conditions, including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations, as well as targeted occupations
- b. The employment needs of employers in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations

As appropriate, a local workforce development area (workforce area) may use an existing analysis, provided that it is recent and provides a current and accurate description of the regional economy.

## Economic Conditions of the Region

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Houston-Sugar Land-Baytown MSA rose to an estimated 490 billion in 2017. The increase follows two consecutive years of declines making it currently the seventh largest economy in the United States. If it were a country it would be an estimated 26<sup>th</sup> largest economy by Gross Domestic Product, larger than Norway, Austria, Thailand, Columbia, and Venezuela. The economy remains dominated by oil and gas exploration and production and it continues to become increasingly diversified in areas of manufacturing and health services.

Low oil prices and its effect on related business challenged the region's economic growth from 2014 to 2017 resulting in very weak growth. Fortunately, the chemical expansions and recovery from Hurricane Harvey, both retail and construction, helped the region move forward. Job growth was strong throughout most of 2018 but by the end of the year outlook for the region softened somewhat even though employment growth has outpaced the nation.

- While the fracking bust is considered over, solid growth returned in 2018, it has been somewhat lackluster compared to previous recoveries. Additionally, oil prices are experiencing weakness in fourth quarter 2018 placing continued recovery on shaky ground.
- Hurricane Harvey's made a positive impact on employment in 2017 but as work winds down Harvey jobs are disappearing.
- The Houston Leading Index (HLI) growth rate slowed towards the end of 2018 suggesting that Houston payrolls will expand more slowly through the next three to 10 months.

- The rate of unemployment dropped by nearly one full percentage point from late 2016 by November 2018 and while the rate remains low it is slightly higher than the nation.
- New projections produced by the Texas Workforce Commission LMCI department indicate long-term job growth has fallen from an estimated 22.4 percent from 2014 to 2024 to an estimated 17.4 percent from 2016 to 2026, a 22.4 percent decline in the pace of projected job growth.
- Major chemical plant construction projects have slowed but new proposals and projects continue at a slower pace.

The Gulf Coast region has always been known for its strength in energy. Energy and the associated businesses make up a large portion of employment. The recent shale boom has had a profound impact on the region. The resulting easy access to natural gas is having a major impact on the region's petrochemical complex. While many of the resulting job growth has been in the construction industry consisting of temporary jobs there remains a critical need for craft labor jobs and technical jobs that require more education and training than a high school diploma, but less than a four-year college degree.

In addition to energy, the region features other important industries. Its centrally southern location with easy access to the Port of Houston makes it an ideal distribution point for numerous maritime, railroad, airline, and motor freight companies. Other industries such as education, trade, and healthcare benefit from a population growth rate that more than doubles that of the nation.

## **Workforce Needs of Businesses, Job Seekers, and Workers**

In developing its strategic plan, the Board takes into account the regional economy, employers' current and projected human resource needs, and the current and future workforce. All of this information plays a part in shaping how we target investments to meet the needs of the labor market and its industries, employers and individuals.

The resources the Board controls are small in contrast to those in the larger workforce system. Our efforts are underwritten by a short list of revenue streams - Child Care Development Block Grant, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, Wagner-Peyser, and Trade Act Assistance. Leveraging our role as an influencer becomes more critical as the pool of Board-controlled resources shrinks. For example, the public education system in the Gulf Coast region includes 76 school districts and 10 community college systems. The Board must leverage its relationship with the educational systems to ensure all young people receive an education that prepares them for the world of work, and adults have access to basic and job-specific educational programs that prepare them for the high-skill, high-wage jobs in our region.

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board has worked to identify the workforce needs of businesses, job candidates, and workers in the workforce region using a combination of labor market intelligence and active participation of various partners and stakeholders. These needs are identified in three lists: 1) Targeted Industries, 2) Where the Jobs Are, and 3) High-Skill, High-Growth Occupations.

The three lists are used to guide not only the Board's strategic investments, but also to help our residents build careers in industries and occupations with good prospects and higher wages. We use the High-Skill, High-Growth Occupations list to decide which occupations we will support with our education scholarship dollars.

The Employer Service Committee reviewed and recommended the initial lists for the target industries and in-demand occupations to the Board. We noted then that we would bring periodic updates to these lists to the Committee and the Board as circumstances warranted.

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board, through its operating affiliate Workforce Solutions, is committed to providing basic labor market information and service to all employers and individuals across the 13-county region. The bulk of the resources available for employer service, however, are targeted to employers in those industries that are likely to contribute the most to the region's economic future. We call this short list of industries the *Gulf Coast Workforce Board Targeted Industries List*.

The *Targeted Industries List*, equivalent to the Commission's in-demand industry list, is simply those industries in which the Board makes major investments. To build the list of targeted industries, we looked at the 2016 through 2026 employment projections data and kept those industries that met specific criteria for total employment, growth and average earnings for workers. Several industries "fell out" because growth is not expected to keep pace with other industries. We added back a few of these industries that will nevertheless remain large and an integral part of the region's economy, even if their growth will be relatively slow in the next decade. Simply put, these industries are too important to the region's economic well-being to not focus on their needs.

While employers in the targeted industries are likely to have needs spanning the entire spectrum of occupations that make up their workforces, those with chronic labor shortages in high-skill occupations have top priority for service financed by Workforce Solutions or one of its partners in the regional workforce system. We believe helping these employers solve their workforce problems will benefit employers and residents of the region alike, and ultimately yield the best return on the taxpayer's investment.

The *Where the Jobs Are List* is the equivalent to the Commission's in-demand occupations list, and more of a

consumer tool used by people looking for work. It is primarily a list of occupations that are expected to provide at least 645 openings every year without regard to earnings potential and skill level. The list is rank-ordered by annual job openings.

Lastly, the *High-Skill, High-Growth Occupations List* is the equivalent to the Commission’s targeted occupations list, and represents the “good jobs” in the region. To build this list, we looked at earnings, the number of jobs expected to be available, the number that are new jobs, and what employers are posting ads for. We looked at educational requirements as a proxy for skill level, and chose higher-skill occupations, i.e. those requiring at least a post-secondary credential or significant work experience. We also considered what businesses are saying they need. Counselors in our offices use this list when talking to customers - “Here are the good jobs; now let me help you figure out how to get one.” We use the list in working with the public education system. For example, the Board is helping align academic and career/technology courses to the High-Skill, High-Growth Occupations, and then to the 16 education career clusters. The Board has developed career planning tools for school teachers, counselors and administrators to use when helping students choose courses that prepare them for good jobs.

Each of the lists is initially derived from the best statistical labor market information available. They are then tempered by the latest regional labor market intelligence (information not reflected in the statistical information) to produce final lists which are subsequently adopted by the Board. This “tempering” process serves as an important validation step, involving small to large local employers, and is conducted in several forums – Workforce Board meetings, the Board Employer Service Committee meetings, and through the Board’s Industry Liaisons’ contacts and committee participation.

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#### 4. A list of the in-demand industry sectors and occupations

##### In-Demand Industries

We began, as always, with labor market data. We used NAICS-level employment and wage data and projections for the 10-year period from 2016 to 2026 and looked for industries that fit the following criteria:

1. Industries with a projected employment growth rate equal to or greater than the 80% of the average growth rate for all industries in the region for the period 2016 to 2026 (>17.4%)
2. Industries having a projected employment growth of at least 2,120 new jobs from 2016 to 2026

3. Industries with an average weekly wage of at least \$1,031 per week.

Additional industries were included in our targeted list due to their overall importance and contribution to the region’s economy and gross regional product.

2111	Oil & Gas Extraction
2131	Support Activities for Mining
3241	Petroleum & Coal Products Manufacturing
3331	Agriculture, Construction, & Mining Machinery Mfg
3329	Other Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing

There has been significant interest from many employers in these industry sectors requesting the Board’s assistance for current and projected skills shortages. We have been working with a number of these employers for several years with a variety of workforce needs.

In addition to the criteria and steps listed above, the selection process was reinforced by the use of additional tools provided by the Texas Workforce Commission:

- Texas Industry Profiles
- Wanted Analytics
- Tracer

Ten out of forty-eight industries, as a result of the analysis, are directly related to the governor’s clusters including:

NAICS Code and Title	Related Governor Clusters
2111 Oil and Gas Extraction	Energy
2371 Utility System Construction	Energy
3241 Petroleum & Coal Products Manufacturing	Petroleum Refining and Chemical Products
3251 Basic Chemical Manufacturing	Advanced Technologies and Manufacturing, Biotechnology and Life Sciences, Petroleum Refining and Chemical Products
3331 Agriculture, Construction, and Mining	Advanced Technologies and Manufacturing,

Machinery Manufacturing	Petroleum Refining and Chemical Products
5413 Architectural & Engineering Services	Advanced Technologies and Manufacturing, Biotechnology and Life Sciences
5415 Computer Systems Design & Related Services	Advanced Technologies and Manufacturing, Information and Computer Technology
5416 Management, Scientific, and Technical Consulting Services	Biotechnology and Life Sciences, Energy
5419 Other Professional & Technical Services	Biotechnology and Life Sciences
6113 Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools	Information and Computer Technology

Targeted Industries List:

5511	Management of Companies and Enterprises	36,003	48,562	12,559	34.9%	\$4,276
5611	Office Administrative Services	22,625	27,801	5,176	22.9%	\$2,213
6111	Elementary and Secondary Schools	201,780	242,528	40,748	20.2%	\$833
6113	Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools	69,240	72,033	2,793	4.0%	\$1,353
6211	Offices of Physicians	49,576	67,311	17,735	35.8%	\$1,574
6212	Offices of Dentists	17,285	20,995	3,710	21.5%	\$908
6214	Outpatient Care Centers	13,671	20,292	6,621	48.4%	\$1,257
6221	General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	87,804	102,902	15,098	17.2%	\$1,267
6223	Specialty (except Psychiatric and Substance Abuse) Hospitals	23,350	30,254	6,904	29.6%	\$1,738
8113	Commercial and Industrial Machinery and Equipment (except Automobile and Truck)	10,269	13,416	3,147	30.6%	\$1,584
4811	Scheduled Air Transportation*	18,980	21,229	2,249	11.8%	\$2,413
2362	Nonresidential Building Construction	43,077	45,113	2,036	4.7%	\$1,898
3241	Petroleum & Coal Products Manufacturing	10,014	9,550	-464	-4.6%	\$3,563
3251	Basic Chemical Manufacturing	22,868	24,079	1,211	5.3%	\$3,228
4831	Deep Sea, Coastal, and Great Lakes Water Transportation	1,826	2,030	204	11.2%	\$2,341
4832	Inland Water Transportation	2,404	2,746	342	14.2%	\$2,185
4841	General Freight Trucking	13,998	15,918	1,920	13.7%	\$1,031
4842	Specialized Freight Trucking	10,685	12,584	1,899	17.8%	\$2,116
4881	Support Activities for Air Transportation	3,460	3,805	345	10.0%	\$1,270
4882	Support Activities for Rail Transportation	2,210	2,688	478	21.6%	\$997
4883	Support Activities for Water Transportation	9,412	11,419	2,007	21.3%	\$1,023
4884	Support Activities for Road Transportation	2,312	2,651	339	14.7%	\$1,021
4885	Freight Transportation Arrangement	9,904	12,192	2,288	23.1%	\$1,542
4889	Other Support Activities for Transportation	1,173	1,278	105	9.0%	\$1,955
4931	Warehousing and Storage	14,162	17,852	3,690	26.1%	\$949

NAICS	Industry	2016 Employment	2026 Employment	Net Change	Percent Change	Average Weekly Wage Q1-2017
2111	Oil and Gas Extraction	50,399	55,853	5,454	10.8%	\$5,925
2131	Support Activities for Mining	35,760	40,982	5,222	14.6%	\$3,038
2361	Residential Building Construction	12,416	16,310	3,894	31.4%	\$1,660
2371	Utility System Construction	30,358	39,550	9,192	30.3%	\$1,775
2381	Foundation, Structure, and Building Exterior Contractors	23,961	29,172	5,211	21.7%	\$991
2382	Building Equipment Contractors	48,213	57,524	9,311	19.3%	\$1,213
2383	Building Finishing Contractors	19,526	23,220	3,694	18.9%	\$937
2389	Other Specialty Trade Contractors	18,999	23,237	4,238	22.3%	\$1,193
3323	Architectural and Structural Metals Manufacturing	13,853	18,635	4,782	34.5%	\$1,145
3327	Machine Shops; Turned Product; and Screw, Nut, and Bolt Manufactu	8,506	11,790	3,284	38.6%	\$1,113
3329	Other Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	11,990	14,970	2,980	24.9%	\$1,410
3331	Agriculture, Construction, and Mining Machinery Manufacturing	29,290	34,371	5,081	17.3%	\$2,632
4238	Machinery, Equipment, and Supplies Merchant Wholesalers	31,826	38,866	7,040	22.1%	\$1,745
4411	Automobile Dealers	28,501	34,462	5,961	20.9%	\$1,181
4885	Freight Transportation Arrangement	9,904	12,192	2,288	23.1%	\$1,542
5239	Other Financial Investment Activities	11,170	13,523	2,353	21.1%	\$4,206
5242	Agencies, Brokerages, and Other Insurance Related Activities	20,002	23,298	3,296	16.5%	\$1,620
5313	Activities Related to Real Estate	13,340	16,406	3,066	23.0%	\$1,098
5412	Accounting, Tax Preparation, Bookkeeping, and Payroll Services	25,003	29,570	4,567	18.3%	\$1,385
5413	Architectural, Engineering, and Related Services	66,146	82,186	16,040	24.2%	\$2,136
5415	Computer Systems Design and Related Services	29,115	34,478	5,363	18.4%	\$2,110
5416	Management, Scientific, and Technical Consulting Services	35,537	42,817	7,280	20.5%	\$2,255
5419	Other Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	16,140	19,725	3,585	22.2%	\$1,322
5511	Management of Companies and Enterprises	36,003	48,562	12,559	34.9%	\$4,276
5611	Office Administrative Services	22,625	27,801	5,176	22.9%	\$2,213
6111	Elementary and Secondary Schools	201,780	242,528	40,748	20.2%	\$833
6113	Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools	69,240	72,033	2,793	4.0%	\$1,353
6211	Offices of Physicians	49,576	67,311	17,735	35.8%	\$1,574

## In-Demand Occupations

We use the “Where the Jobs Are” list to identify those occupations that are growing. We don’t use wage or other kinds of criteria to refine the list; it consists entirely of those jobs in which we expect to see openings over the next 10 years. Occupations on this list are those with projected annual average total job openings greater than or equal to 645 per year.

**GULF COAST WORKFORCE REGION**

**Where The Jobs Are <sup>1,2</sup>**

SOC	Occupational Title	Annual Average Employment 2016	Annual Average Employment 2026	Number Change 2016-2026	Percent Growth 2016-2026	Annual Openings Due to Exits from Workforce	Annual Openings Due to Transfers from Occupation	Annual Openings Due to New Job Growth	Total Annual Openings	Typical Education Needed for Entry into Occupation	Work Experience in a related Occupation	Typical	Median Wage 2017
<b>00-0000</b>	<b>Total, All Occupations</b>	<b>3,202,048</b>	<b>3,737,792</b>	<b>535,744</b>	<b>17.4</b>	<b>160,248</b>	<b>218,286</b>	<b>35,374</b>	<b>434,108</b>				<b>\$18.70</b>
35-3021	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	71,739	98,228	26,489	36.9	7,525	7,870	2,649	18,044	No formal credential	None	Short-term	\$9.19
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	91,901	104,572	12,671	13.8	6,219	7,796	1,267	15,282	No formal credential	None	Short-term	\$10.68
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses	57,107	72,560	15,453	27.1	4,799	7,353	1,545	13,697	No formal credential	None	Short-term	\$9.26
41-2011	Cashiers	62,233	67,679	5,446	8.8	6,099	5,952	545	12,596	No formal credential	None	Short-term	\$9.79
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	89,135	95,378	6,243	7.0	5,414	5,275	624	11,313	High school	None	Short-term	\$17.17
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	54,801	62,295	7,494	13.7	2,993	4,392	749	8,134	High school	None	Short-term	\$15.51
39-9021	Personal Care Aides	38,830	54,620	15,790	40.7	3,729	2,809	1,579	8,117	High school	None	Short-term	\$9.22
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	46,525	53,881	7,356	15.8	3,268	3,158	736	7,162	No formal credential	None	Short-term	\$10.65
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	42,510	49,502	6,992	16.4	2,279	3,934	699	6,912	No formal credential	None	Short-term	\$12.48
43-5081	Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	39,913	46,284	6,371	16.0	2,353	3,070	637	6,060	High school	None	Short-term	\$12.32
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	41,611	48,742	7,131	17.1	1,916	2,838	713	5,467	Postsecondary non-deg	None	Short-term	\$19.49
47-2061	Construction Laborers	40,323	48,132	7,809	19.4	1,543	2,916	781	5,240	No formal credential	None	Short-term	\$14.56
35-3022	Counter Attendants, Cafeteria, Food Concession, and Coffee Shop	20,226	24,505	4,279	21.2	2,687	2,112	428	5,227	No formal credential	None	Short-term	\$9.20
11-2011	General and Operations Managers	47,955	57,269	9,314	19.4	1,091	3,138	931	5,160	Bachelor's	5 years or more	None	\$58.76
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	25,256	33,775	8,519	33.7	1,729	2,361	852	4,942	No formal credential	Less than 5 years	Moderate-term	\$11.90
43-6014	Secretaries & Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, & Exec	45,880	46,253	373	0.8	2,482	2,414	37	4,933	High school	None	Short-term	\$16.94
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	40,808	48,606	7,798	19.1	1,320	2,572	780	4,672	Bachelor's	None	None	\$37.36
39-9011	Childcare Workers	26,688	30,706	4,018	15.1	2,342	1,777	402	4,521	High school	None	Short-term	\$9.89
29-1141	Registered Nurses	52,641	65,839	13,198	25.1	1,696	1,288	1,320	4,304	Bachelor's	None	None	\$37.49
41-3099	Sales Representatives, Services, All Other	29,179	34,546	5,367	18.4	1,008	2,750	537	4,295	High school	None	Moderate-term	\$25.04
33-9032	Security Guards	27,035	31,372	4,337	16.0	1,732	2,060	434	4,226	High school	None	Short-term	\$11.89
41-4012	Sales Rep., Wholesale & Manufacturing, Except Tech. & Scientific Pro	32,851	38,284	5,433	16.5	1,174	2,382	543	4,099	High school	None	Moderate-term	\$31.23
43-6013	Medical Secretaries	26,057	34,030	7,973	30.6	1,618	1,574	797	3,989	High school	None	Moderate-term	\$16.28
35-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	20,653	26,789	6,136	29.7	1,063	2,263	614	3,940	High school	Less than 5 years	None	\$20.45
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	31,635	33,789	2,154	6.8	2,026	1,572	215	3,813	Some college, no degr	None	Moderate-term	\$19.59
37-2012	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	24,257	27,668	3,411	14.1	1,922	1,451	341	3,714	No formal credential	None	Short-term	\$9.48
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Ed.	35,949	43,854	7,905	22.0	1,317	1,477	790	3,584	Bachelor's	None	None	\$29.04
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	28,309	32,310	4,001	14.1	1,119	2,040	400	3,559	High school	Less than 5 years	None	\$19.69
35-2021	Food Preparation Workers	16,257	20,487	4,230	26.0	1,468	1,593	423	3,484	No formal credential	None	Short-term	\$11.10
49-9071	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	28,565	33,391	4,826	16.9	1,262	1,723	483	3,468	High school	None	Moderate-term	\$17.45
43-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	29,163	32,350	3,187	10.9	1,193	1,775	319	3,287	High school	Less than 5 years	None	\$28.20
35-9031	Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop	11,073	14,136	3,063	27.7	1,452	1,379	306	3,137	No formal credential	None	Short-term	\$9.58
41-3014	Nursing Assistants	19,908	24,802	4,894	24.6	1,358	1,130	489	2,977	Postsecondary non-deg	None	None	\$12.70
47-1011	Supervisors of Construction and Extraction Workers	23,931	28,393	4,462	18.6	837	1,650	446	2,933	High school	5 years or more	None	\$33.50
37-3011	Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	20,683	23,741	3,058	14.8	1,037	1,587	306	2,930	No formal credential	None	Short-term	\$12.13
31-1011	Home Health Aides	14,162	20,809	6,647	46.9	1,062	884	665	2,611	High school	None	Short-term	\$9.09
47-2111	Electricians	19,432	22,445	3,013	15.5	729	1,556	301	2,586	High school	None	Apprenticeship	\$26.25
51-9198	Helpers-Production Workers	12,725	16,455	3,730	29.3	782	1,389	373	2,544	High school	None	Short-term	\$13.94
25-3098	Substitute Teachers	18,037	21,932	3,895	21.6	1,218	935	390	2,543	Info not available	Info not available	Info not available	\$12.24
51-4121	Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers	18,269	22,318	4,049	22.2	540	1,585	405	2,530	High school	None	Moderate-term	\$23.04
25-9041	Teacher Assistants	18,898	23,026	4,128	21.8	1,151	956	413	2,520	Some college, no degr	None	None	\$10.66
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Ed	23,694	28,954	5,260	22.2	806	982	526	2,314	Bachelor's	None	None	\$28.87
53-3033	Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	17,108	20,153	3,045	17.8	790	1,170	304	2,264	High school	None	Short-term	\$14.64
31-9092	Medical Assistants	13,726	19,064	5,338	38.9	720	1,007	534	2,261	Postsecondary non-deg	None	None	\$15.03
43-4171	Receptionists and Information Clerks	15,114	16,886	1,772	11.7	995	1,062	177	2,234	High school	None	Short-term	\$12.52
35-3011	Barenders	10,700	13,355	2,655	24.8	579	1,380	266	2,225	No formal credential	None	Short-term	\$11.38
35-9011	Dining Room and Cafeteria Attendants and Bartender Helpers	10,189	12,847	2,658	26.1	1,025	913	266	2,204	No formal credential	None	Short-term	\$9.30
53-7051	Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	15,658	18,504	2,846	18.2	595	1,278	285	2,158	No formal credential	None	Short-term	\$15.91
13-1199	Business Operations Specialists, All Other	17,865	20,928	3,063	17.1	608	1,119	306	2,033	Bachelor's	None	None	\$38.95
51-9061	Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers & Weighers	15,962	16,876	914	5.7	682	1,257	91	2,030	High school	None	Moderate-term	\$19.92
43-5071	Shipping, Receiving, and Traffic Clerks	17,737	19,609	1,872	10.6	729	1,112	187	2,028	High school	None	Short-term	\$15.32
41-2021	Counter and Rental Clerks	13,940	15,541	1,601	11.5	774	1,082	160	2,016	No formal credential	None	Short-term	\$12.07
47-2152	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	14,522	17,420	2,898	20.0	579	1,068	290	1,937	High school	None	Apprenticeship	\$25.70
47-2031	Carpenters	16,398	18,949	2,551	15.6	608	982	255	1,845	High school	None	Apprenticeship	\$18.66
47-2141	Painters, Construction and Maintenance	10,393	11,922	1,529	14.7	381	556	153	1,090	No formal credential	None	Moderate-term	\$18.38
51-2092	Team Assemblers	8,480	9,158	678	8.0	377	639	68	1,084	High school	None	Moderate-term	\$13.79
39-2021	Nonfarm Animal Caretakers	5,237	6,944	1,707	32.6	416	491	171	1,078	High school	None	Short-term	\$9.42
41-1012	First-Line Supervisors of Non-Retail Sales Workers	9,735	11,068	1,333	13.7	346	580	133	1,059	High school	Less than 5 years	None	\$36.17
17-2051	Civil Engineers	10,634	12,841	2,207	20.8	254	578	221	1,053	Bachelor's	None	None	\$50.37
47-5071	Roustabouts, Oil and Gas	6,876	8,187	1,311	19.1	256	655	131	1,042	No formal credential	None	Moderate-term	\$16.54
39-3091	Amusement and Recreation Attendants	4,019	4,653	634	15.8	458	515	63	1,036	No formal credential	None	Short-term	\$9.04
41-3021	Insurance Sales Agents	8,964	10,233	1,269	14.2	390	516	127	1,033	High school	None	Moderate-term	\$18.51
43-6011	Executive Secretaries and Executive Administrative Assistants	11,725	10,263	-1,462	-12.5	592	576	-146	1,022	High school	Less than 5 years	None	\$29.10
11-3031	Financial Managers	8,878	11,623	2,745	30.9	236	507	274	1,017	Bachelor's	5 years or more	None	\$69.23
33-3012	Correctional Officers and Jailers	12,166	12,416	250	2.1	434	552	25	1,011	High school	None	Moderate-term	\$20.44
31-9091	Dental Assistants	6,933	8,380	1,447	20.9	391	438	145	974	Postsecondary non-deg	None	None	\$16.89
39-9031	Fitness Trainers and Aerobics Instructors	4,967	5,782	815	16.4	352	538	82	972	High school	None	Short-term	\$20.59
21-2011	Clergy	8,210	8,720	510	6.2	388	519	51	958	Bachelor's	None	Moderate-term	\$23.89
23-1011	Lawyers	15,874	18,281	2,407	15.2	339	369	241	949	Doctoral or prof.	None	None	\$75.57
17-2171	Petroleum Engineers	10,636	12,567	1,931	18.2	209	537	193	939	Bachelor's	None	None	\$75.05
13-1161	Market Research Analysts & Marketing Specialists	6,660	8,667	2,007	30.1	203	526	201	930	Bachelor's	None	None	\$35.05
49-3031	Bus & Truck Mechanics & Diesel Engine Specialists	7,782	9,448	1,666	21.4	264	492	167	923	High school	None	Long-term	\$23.04
51-9011	Chemical Equipment Operators and Tenders	8,147	8,455	308	3.8	228	651	31	910	High school	None	Moderate-term	\$34.55
53-2031	Flight Attendants	6,367	7,831	1,464	23.0	351	402	146	899	High school	Less than 5 years	Moderate-term	\$27.13
29-2052	Pharmacy Technicians	8,502	10,246	1,744	20.5	304	416	174	894	High school	None	Moderate-term	\$16.55
27-3031	Public Relations Specialists	7,299	8,607	1,308	17.9	223	538	131	892	Bachelor's	None	None	\$28.80
13-2051	Financial Analysts	8,081	9,593	1,512	18.7	176	555	151	882	Bachelor's	None	None	\$41.02
45-2093	Farmworkers, Farm, Ranch, and Aquacultural Animals	5,456	5,724	268	4.9	204	637	27	868	No formal credential	None	Short-term	\$11.96
13-1023	Purchasing Agents, exc. Wholesale, Retail & Farm.												

35-9021	Dishwashers	9,447	11,555	2,108	22.3	777	837	211	1,825	No formal credential	None	Short-term	\$10.35
11-9013	Farmers, Ranchers & Other Ag. Managers	22,792	23,650	858	3.8	1,358	345	86	1,789	High school	5 years or more	None	\$26.21
53-7064	Packers and Packagers, Hand	10,729	11,516	787	7.3	753	908	79	1,740	No formal credential	None	Short-term	\$10.35
25-2022	Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	17,238	21,062	3,824	22.2	632	709	382	1,723	Bachelor's	None	None	\$29.01
53-3031	Driver/Sales Workers	14,459	15,622	1,163	8.0	638	945	116	1,699	High school	None	Short-term	\$12.55
35-2012	Cooks, Fast Food	10,382	11,809	1,427	13.7	650	888	143	1,681	No formal credential	None	Short-term	\$9.70
39-5012	Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	11,457	13,365	1,908	16.7	828	620	191	1,639	Postsecondary non-deg	None	None	\$12.05
51-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	13,892	15,914	2,022	14.6	475	954	202	1,631	High school	Less than 5 years	None	\$32.07
13-1071	Human Resources Specialists	13,918	16,019	2,101	15.1	434	984	210	1,628	Bachelor's	None	None	\$30.74
53-7061	Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment	9,198	10,854	1,656	18.0	517	870	166	1,553	No formal credential	None	Short-term	\$10.96
33-3051	Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers	16,867	20,537	3,670	21.8	452	729	367	1,548	High school	None	Moderate-term	\$31.76
47-2073	Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators	10,504	12,741	2,237	21.3	444	815	224	1,483	High school	None	Moderate-term	\$19.10
41-9022	Real Estate Sales Agents	12,488	14,564	2,076	16.6	692	527	208	1,427	High school	None	Moderate-term	\$29.30
49-3023	Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics	12,515	14,378	1,863	14.9	424	812	186	1,422	Postsecondary non-deg	None	Short-term	\$20.05
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	13,460	16,720	3,260	24.2	532	524	326	1,382	Postsecondary non-deg	None	None	\$22.70
43-3021	Billing and Posting Clerks	10,446	12,852	2,406	23.0	498	641	241	1,380	High school	None	Moderate-term	\$18.19
45-2092	Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse	8,411	8,935	524	6.2	317	988	52	1,357	No formal credential	None	Short-term	\$9.66
51-4041	Machinists	9,758	12,260	2,502	25.6	382	717	250	1,349	High school	None	Long-term	\$21.97
43-3071	Tellers	10,719	11,409	690	6.4	567	711	69	1,347	High school	None	Short-term	\$13.31
13-1111	Management Analysts	11,328	13,828	2,500	22.1	404	650	250	1,304	Bachelor's	Less than 5 years	None	\$47.82
11-9021	Construction Managers	14,488	16,942	2,454	16.9	360	698	245	1,303	Bachelor's	None	Moderate-term	\$46.25
25-2011	Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	10,651	12,455	1,804	16.9	498	617	180	1,295	Associate's degree	None	None	\$11.55
15-1132	Software Developers, Applications	12,585	16,426	3,841	30.5	198	712	384	1,294	Bachelor's	None	None	\$52.59
35-2012	Cooks, Institution and Cafeteria	7,817	8,954	1,137	14.5	491	671	114	1,276	No formal credential	None	Short-term	\$11.87
49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	10,901	13,138	2,237	20.5	406	621	224	1,251	High school	None	Long-term	\$27.94
53-3022	Bus Drivers, School or Special Client	9,044	10,097	1,053	11.6	751	391	105	1,247	High school	None	Short-term	\$15.56
15-1151	Computer User Support Specialists	13,202	15,393	2,191	16.6	290	736	219	1,245	Some college, no degree	None	None	\$26.78
15-1121	Computer Systems Analysts	15,630	17,580	1,950	12.5	304	741	195	1,240	Bachelor's	None	None	\$44.48
41-3031	Securities, Commodities, and Financial Services Sales Agents	10,730	12,382	1,652	15.4	303	762	165	1,230	Bachelor's	None	Moderate-term	\$23.97
39-9032	Recreation Workers	5,535	6,791	1,256	22.7	403	616	126	1,145	High school	None	Short-term	\$11.17
49-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	10,234	11,960	1,726	16.9	359	572	173	1,104	High school	Less than 5 years	None	\$33.06
43-5061	Production, Planning, and Expediting Clerks	8,626	10,164	1,538	17.8	326	610	154	1,090	High school	None	Moderate-term	\$23.17
23-2011	Paralegals and Legal Assistants	5,965	7,172	1,207	20.2	217	437	121	775	Associate's degree	None	None	\$27.58
21-1012	Educational, Guidance, School, and Vocational Counselors	5,715	6,902	1,187	20.8	232	413	119	764	Master's	None	None	\$30.02
11-2022	Sales Managers	6,897	8,144	1,247	18.1	171	456	125	752	Bachelor's	Less than 5 years	None	\$64.13
43-9041	Insurance Claims and Policy Processing Clerks	5,922	7,021	1,099	18.6	276	363	110	749	High school	None	Moderate-term	\$17.26
11-9199	Managers, All Other	8,345	9,617	1,272	15.2	243	377	127	747	Bachelor's	Less than 5 years	None	\$59.91
19-2042	Geoscientists, Except Hydrologists & Geographers	6,286	7,525	1,239	19.7	149	474	124	747	Bachelor's	None	None	\$64.47
17-2141	Mechanical Engineers	8,127	9,950	1,823	22.4	184	376	182	742	Bachelor's	None	None	\$47.94
49-9098	Helpers--Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Workers	4,648	5,600	952	20.5	246	387	95	728	High school	None	Short-term	\$14.37
43-4151	Order Clerks	5,876	6,234	358	6.1	281	396	36	713	High school	None	Short-term	\$18.13
47-2051	Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers	5,151	6,222	1,071	20.8	216	386	107	709	No formal credential	None	Moderate-term	\$16.03
43-3011	Bill and Account Collectors	6,316	6,639	323	5.1	243	425	32	700	High school	None	Moderate-term	\$18.24
35-2015	Cooks, Short Order	4,290	4,873	583	13.6	268	366	58	692	No formal credential	None	Short-term	\$11.09
53-1031	First-Line Supervisors of Trans. & Material-Moving Machine & Vehicle	5,334	6,324	990	18.6	187	401	99	687	High school	Less than 5 years	None	\$28.53
43-4081	Hotel, Motel, and Resort Desk Clerks	3,999	4,342	343	8.6	231	412	34	677	High school	None	Short-term	\$10.36
13-1051	Cost Estimators	5,194	6,192	998	19.2	179	370	100	649	Bachelor's	None	Moderate-term	\$34.46

## 5. A list of the target occupations

### High-Skill, High-Growth Occupations

The high-skill, high-growth list is made up of larger, high-skill, well-paying occupations critical to the Gulf Coast region's economic future. They offer the best job opportunities to area residents now and will likely continue doing so over the next ten plus years. These occupations are found in many industries in the region, not just in those on the in-demand industries list. Please note that the Board uses a modified list for the career exploration portion of its website (<http://www.wrksolutions.com/for-individuals/career-exploration>). In the modified career exploration version, the following occupations have been consolidated into the XX-XXXX created occupation above each collection:

- 17-2XXX Engineers, Aerospace, Electrical., Mechanical, Environmental
- 17-2011 Aerospace Engineers<sup>3</sup>
- 17-2071 Electrical Engineers
- 17-2072 Electronics Engineers, Except Computer<sup>2</sup>
- 17-2081 Environmental Engineers<sup>3</sup>
- 17-2141 Mechanical Engineers
- 25-20XX Kinder., Elem., Middle, Secondary Teachers, Ex. Special Ed.<sup>5</sup>

25-2012	Kindergarten Teachers, Ex. Special Ed.5
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Ex. Special Ed.5
25-2022	Middle School Teachers, Ex. Special Ed. & CTE
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Ex. Special Ed. & CTE5
25-205X	Special Ed. Teachers, Preschool thru Secondary2,5
25-2051	Special Education Teachers, Preschool2,5
25-2052	Special Education Teachers, Kindergarten & Elementary School5
25-2053	Special Education Teachers, Middle School2,5
25-2054	Special Education Teachers, Secondary School5
29-10XX	Physicians incl. Dentists2,3
29-1061	Anesthesiologists
29-1011	Chiropractors3
29-1021	Dentists, General
29-1062	Family & General Practitioners
29-1063	Internists, General2
29-1064	Obstetricians & Gynecologists3
29-1041	Optometrists3
29-1065	Pediatricians, General2
29-1081	Podiatrists3
29-1066	Psychiatrists2
29-1067	Surgeons2
17-2XXX	Engineers, Chem., Industrial, Materials, Marine, Mining, Petroleum2,3
17-2041	Chemical Engineers
17-2112	Industrial Engineers
17-2131	Materials Engineers3
17-2121	Marine Engineers & Naval Architects2
17-2151	Mining & Geological Engineers, Including Mining Safety Engineers3
17-2171	Petroleum Engineers

The full list as formatted in this plan is available on the Board's website at <http://www.wrksolutions.com/about-us/local-workforce-development-plan>.

### Qualifying Criteria:

Occupations meet the following criteria to be included on the high-skill, high-growth occupations list. They must:

- projected employment for 2024 equal to or greater than the average for all occupations in the region (5,633)
- a projected employment growth rate equal to or greater than the average growth rate for all industries in the region (22.4%)

- ~~minimum education requirements of a post-secondary certificate or degree, moderate on-the-job training, long-term on-the-job training, or work experience in a related occupation~~
- ~~median hourly wages equal to or greater than the median for all occupations in the region (\$18.06 per hour)~~
- be present in staffing patterns of one or more Gulf Coast Workforce Board Targeted Industries
- have 50% or more of its employment in Gulf Coast Workforce Board Targeted Industries as of 2026
- have an employment size greater than or equal to 1,819 in 2026
- have employment growth rate of greater than or equal to 17.4 percent from 2016-2026
- have minimum education requirements of a post-secondary certificate or degree, high school diploma coupled with minimum of moderate on-the-job training, long-term on-the-job training, or work experience in related occupation
- have median hourly wages greater than or equal to \$18.70

SOC Code	SOC Title	Annual Average Employment 2016	Annual Average Employment 2026	Number Change 2016-2026	Percent Change 2016-2026	Annual Exits from Workforce	Annual Transfers from Occupation	Annual Change in Employment (Growth)	Total Annual Openings	Typical Education Needed for Entry into Occupation	Work Experience in a Related Occupation	Typical on-the-job Training	Mean Wage	Entry Wage	Experienced Wage	PCT10 Wage	PCT25 Wage	PCT50 Median	PCT75 Wage	PCT90 Wage
13-1051	Cost Estimators	5,194	6,192	998	19.2	179	370	100	649	Bachelor's degree	None	Moderate-ter	\$37.38	\$20.85	\$45.64	\$18.36	\$24.32	\$34.46	\$45.30	\$61.33
13-1081	Logisticians	4,312	5,066	754	17.5	115	330	75	520	Bachelor's degree	None	None	\$45.01	\$24.61	\$55.21	\$22.33	\$28.09	\$39.60	\$55.61	\$73.00
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	40,808	48,606	7,798	19.1	1,320	2,572	780	4,672	Bachelor's degree	None	None	\$42.75	\$24.83	\$51.71	\$22.00	\$28.91	\$37.36	\$50.26	\$69.71
15-1121	Computer Systems Analysts	15,630	17,580	1,950	12.5	304	741	195	1,240	Bachelor's degree	None	None	\$48.48	\$29.68	\$57.88	\$26.63	\$33.94	\$44.48	\$57.77	\$73.38
15-1132	Software Developers, Applications	12,585	16,428	3,841	30.5	198	712	384	1,294	Bachelor's degree	None	None	\$52.88	\$35.44	\$61.60	\$32.21	\$40.19	\$52.59	\$63.79	\$75.84
15-1133	Software Developers, Systems Software	7,212	8,079	867	12.0	104	375	87	506	Bachelor's degree	None	None	\$54.66	\$36.34	\$63.63	\$32.48	\$41.46	\$53.27	\$66.64	\$80.76
15-1141	Database Administrators	3,278	3,851	573	17.5	75	148	57	200	Bachelor's degree	None	None	\$42.96	\$26.16	\$51.36	\$23.86	\$29.97	\$42.49	\$54.90	\$65.15
15-1142	Network and Computer Systems Administrators	6,313	9,300	2,987	11.3	124	414	99	637	Bachelor's degree	None	None	\$43.01	\$30.60	\$58.22	\$27.85	\$35.44	\$45.80	\$60.24	\$76.31
15-2031	Operations Research Analysts	2,166	2,838	672	31.0	51	94	67	212	Bachelor's degree	None	None	\$44.96	\$26.40	\$54.24	\$23.45	\$30.31	\$40.21	\$55.68	\$75.46
17-1022	Surveyors	1,520	1,887	367	24.1	50	69	37	156	Bachelor's degree	None	Internship/tee	\$32.15	\$18.02	\$39.21	\$16.41	\$20.39	\$29.07	\$41.18	\$48.55
17-2011	Aerospace Engineers	3,045	3,427	382	12.5	73	116	38	227	Bachelor's degree	None	None	\$58.28	\$40.90	\$66.96	\$36.20	\$47.76	\$61.05	\$71.20	\$77.83
17-2031	Biomedical Engineers	231	259	28	12.1	5	11	3	19	Bachelor's degree	None	None	\$40.76	\$23.00	\$49.64	\$20.80	\$28.07	\$40.29	\$50.08	\$67.23
17-2041	Chemical Engineers	4,061	4,333	272	21.5	98	184	87	369	Bachelor's degree	None	None	\$72.74	\$42.67	\$87.78	\$40.61	\$49.76	\$62.09	\$86.19	\$118.79
17-2051	Civil Engineers	10,634	12,841	2,207	20.8	254	578	221	1,053	Bachelor's degree	None	None	\$55.40	\$31.52	\$67.34	\$28.67	\$36.21	\$50.37	\$70.03	\$89.36
17-2071	Electrical Engineers	4,137	4,987	850	20.5	103	183	85	371	Bachelor's degree	None	None	\$50.09	\$32.16	\$59.05	\$31.04	\$36.64	\$46.87	\$60.79	\$75.35
17-2072	Electronics Engineers, Except Computer	2,693	3,246	553	20.5	67	119	55	241	Bachelor's degree	None	None	\$65.30	\$40.54	\$77.67	\$37.56	\$45.96	\$59.53	\$77.03	\$93.21
17-2081	Environmental Engineers	818	945	127	15.5	20	36	13	69	Bachelor's degree	None	None	\$64.43	\$37.51	\$77.89	\$33.13	\$43.77	\$54.65	\$76.49	\$93.45
17-2111	Health and Safety Engineers, Except Mining	1,419	1,627	208	14.7	35	62	21	118	Bachelor's degree	None	None	\$53.42	\$28.22	\$66.03	\$25.19	\$34.28	\$47.50	\$68.47	\$86.37
17-2121	Industrial Engineers	5,093	6,097	1,004	19.7	128	228	100	456	Bachelor's degree	None	None	\$59.90	\$36.57	\$71.57	\$32.97	\$41.38	\$53.72	\$70.77	\$94.25
17-2121	Marine Engineers and Naval Architects	827	976	149	18.0	21	33	15	69	Bachelor's degree	None	None	\$43.04	\$24.05	\$52.53	\$21.22	\$27.49	\$41.48	\$51.50	\$67.72
17-2131	Materials Engineers	847	762	-85	-17.8	22	27	12	61	Bachelor's degree	None	None	\$50.38	\$31.70	\$64.66	\$32.63	\$38.33	\$45.36	\$59.31	\$76.76
17-2141	Mechanical Engineers	8,127	9,950	1,823	22.4	184	376	182	742	Bachelor's degree	None	None	\$54.55	\$34.34	\$64.66	\$32.63	\$38.33	\$47.34	\$64.19	\$84.07
17-2151	Mining and Geological Engineers, Including Petroleum Engineers	10,636	12,567	1,931	18.2	209	537	193	939	Bachelor's degree	None	None	\$85.09	\$46.90	\$104.19	\$41.54	\$55.46	\$75.05	\$108.17	\$148.54
17-3011	Architectural and Civil Drafters	4,195	5,070	875	20.9	137	250	88	475	Associate's degree	None	None	\$27.06	\$19.16	\$31.02	\$17.49	\$20.86	\$25.31	\$31.47	\$38.91
17-3013	Mechanical Drafters	2,062	2,485	423	20.5	67	123	42	232	Associate's degree	None	None	\$34.34	\$21.04	\$40.99	\$19.51	\$23.74	\$32.44	\$43.37	\$54.90
17-3022	Civil Engineering Technicians	2,888	3,462	574	19.9	102	167	57	326	Associate's degree	None	None	\$30.35	\$16.12	\$37.46	\$15.00	\$18.83	\$25.48	\$34.68	\$53.44
17-3023	Electrical and Electronic Engineering Technicians	4,825	5,549	724	15.0	166	273	72	511	Associate's degree	None	None	\$33.11	\$17.82	\$40.75	\$15.80	\$21.85	\$30.27	\$38.64	\$55.50
17-3027	Mechanical Engineering Technicians	2,102	2,548	446	21.2	74	122	45	241	Associate's degree	None	None	\$41.10	\$20.36	\$51.47	\$17.51	\$25.17	\$35.31	\$53.75	\$77.93
17-3031	Surveying and Mapping Technicians	3,000	3,727	727	24.2	111	239	73	423	High school diploma	None	Moderate-ter	\$22.78	\$14.86	\$26.73	\$13.60	\$16.92	\$22.03	\$27.90	\$32.61
19-2042	Geoscientists, Except Hydrologists and Geophysicists	6,286	7,525	1,239	19.7	149	474	124	747	Bachelor's degree	None	None	\$74.47	\$36.91	\$93.25	\$31.43	\$45.49	\$64.47	\$94.19	\$145.87

19-3031	Clinical, Counseling, and School Psychol	1,779	2,141	362	20.3	49	75	36	160	Doctoral or profes	None	Internship/tes	\$32.29	\$22.13	\$37.37	\$19.09	\$26.05	\$31.19	\$37.55	\$46.64
19-4041	Geological and Petroleum Technicians	2,618	3,043	425	16.2	78	204	42	324	Associate's degre	None	Moderate-ter	\$39.85	\$18.00	\$50.78	\$15.90	\$21.54	\$33.10	\$48.51	\$73.87
21-1012	Educational, Guidance, School, and Voc	5,715	6,902	1,187	20.8	232	413	119	764	Master's degree	None	None	\$29.91	\$20.29	\$34.71	\$17.56	\$23.94	\$30.02	\$36.16	\$40.75
21-1022	Healthcare Social Workers	2,708	3,466	758	28.0	111	196	76	383	Master's degree	None	Internship/tes	\$31.16	\$20.00	\$36.74	\$15.94	\$24.73	\$30.26	\$37.92	\$47.20
23-1011	Lawyers	15,874	19,261	2,407	15.2	339	369	241	949	Doctoral or profes	None	None	\$63.60	\$37.55	\$106.63	\$31.13	\$49.02	\$75.57	\$110.55	\$167.58
23-2011	Paralegals and Legal Assistants	5,965	7,172	1,207	20.2	217	437	121	775	Associate's degre	None	None	\$29.55	\$18.85	\$35.90	\$14.09	\$20.15	\$27.59	\$36.95	\$51.27
25-1071	Health Specialists Teachers, Postsecou	3,089	3,893	714	23.1	126	131	71	328	Doctoral or profes	Less than 1	None	\$61.95	\$33.01	\$105.52	\$27.48	\$42.36	\$70.59	\$118.26	\$153.90
25-2011	Preschool Teachers, Except Special Ed	10,651	12,455	1,804	16.9	498	617	180	1,295	Associate's degre	None	None	\$15.53	\$9.28	\$18.85	\$8.53	\$9.85	\$11.55	\$16.93	\$30.78
25-2012	Kindergarten Teachers, Except Special E	4,357	5,253	896	20.6	207	257	90	554	Bachelor's degre	None	None	\$28.36	\$20.20	\$32.45	\$15.01	\$24.93	\$28.63	\$33.50	\$38.95
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Except Spl	35,349	43,854	7,905	22.0	1,317	1,477	790	3,584	Bachelor's degre	None	None	\$29.95	\$24.45	\$32.71	\$22.34	\$25.89	\$29.04	\$33.79	\$39.31
25-2022	Middle School Teachers, Except Special	17,238	21,062	3,824	22.2	632	709	382	1,723	Bachelor's degre	None	None	\$29.79	\$24.86	\$32.25	\$22.79	\$26.06	\$29.01	\$33.12	\$38.67
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Spl	23,634	28,954	5,280	22.2	806	982	526	2,314	Bachelor's degre	None	None	\$29.73	\$25.54	\$31.83	\$24.32	\$26.20	\$28.87	\$32.59	\$38.06
25-2032	Career/Technical Education Teachers, S	1,657	2,006	349	21.1	56	68	35	153	Bachelor's degre	Less than 1	None	\$31.76	\$25.50	\$34.89	\$23.96	\$26.79	\$30.86	\$36.54	\$42.55
25-2051	Special Education Teachers, Preschool	284	345	61	21.5	10	12	6	28	Bachelor's degre	None	None	\$31.41	\$24.74	\$34.75	\$22.68	\$26.62	\$30.80	\$36.60	\$40.26
25-2052	Special Education Teachers, Kindergart	2,198	2,672	474	21.6	81	89	47	217	Bachelor's degre	None	None	\$31.56	\$25.81	\$34.43	\$24.17	\$26.78	\$30.08	\$36.06	\$42.15
25-2053	Special Education Teachers, Middle Sch	1,486	1,783	317	21.6	54	59	32	145	Bachelor's degre	None	None	\$31.36	\$25.64	\$34.21	\$23.67	\$26.64	\$30.03	\$35.95	\$41.41
25-2054	Special Education Teachers, Secondary	2,447	2,976	529	21.6	90	99	53	242	Bachelor's degre	None	None	\$30.69	\$25.39	\$33.33	\$23.90	\$26.42	\$29.47	\$34.69	\$39.83
25-4021	Librarians	2,412	2,855	443	18.4	144	98	44	286	Master's degree	None	None	\$29.87	\$22.60	\$33.51	\$20.89	\$25.37	\$28.99	\$34.29	\$39.32
25-9031	Instructional Coordinators	3,588	4,337	749	20.9	188	162	75	425	Master's degree	5 years or r	None	\$34.85	\$24.78	\$39.58	\$24.44	\$28.44	\$34.85	\$41.19	\$47.69
27-3091	Interpreters and Translators	2,064	2,545	481	23.3	104	100	48	252	Bachelor's degre	None	None	\$24.21	\$15.24	\$28.69	\$12.53	\$18.87	\$24.78	\$29.15	\$33.44
29-1011	Chiropractors	775	881	106	13.7	14	7	11	32	Doctoral or profes	None	None	\$35.89	\$21.24	\$43.21	\$20.05	\$21.89	\$26.64	\$33.23	\$81.37
29-1021	Dentists, General	1,940	2,380	440	22.7	40	16	44	100	Doctoral or profes	None	None	\$90.86	\$34.25	\$119.16	\$22.33	\$46.01	\$77.05	\$111.43	\$149.33
29-1041	Optometers	846	1,008	162	19.1	16	12	16	44	Doctoral or profes	None	None	\$46.66	\$18.94	\$60.53	\$17.68	\$22.50	\$42.24	\$61.84	\$93.31
29-1061	Anesthesiologists	1,524	1,963	439	28.8	26	19	44	89	Doctoral or profes	None	Internship/tes	\$129.41	\$75.67	\$155.66	\$51.29	\$93.79	\$113.38	\$152.51	\$214.60
29-1062	Family and General Practitioners	2,320	2,942	622	26.8	39	23	62	130	Doctoral or profes	None	Internship/tes	\$102.17	\$51.11	\$127.71	\$38.54	\$65.78	\$98.15	\$121.63	\$169.17
29-1063	Internists, General	1,034	1,338	304	29.4	17	13	30	60	Doctoral or profes	None	Internship/tes	\$64.84	\$35.09	\$79.71	\$28.27	\$42.30	\$63.13	\$83.53	\$97.22
29-1064	Obstetricians and Gynecologists	466	569	102	27.4	79	55	122	252	Doctoral or profes	None	Internship/tes	304.13	31.87	110.26	27.75	44.73	68.85	113.34	145.36
29-1065	Pediatricians, General	682	874	192	28.2	11	9	19	39	Doctoral or profes	None	Internship/tes	\$70.71	\$38.37	\$66.59	\$27.63	\$48.60	\$71.55	\$90.66	\$114.37
29-1066	Psychiatrists	152	191	39	25.7	2	2	4	8	Doctoral or profes	None	Internship/tes	\$78.55	\$43.50	\$98.08	\$28.59	\$56.72	\$71.14	\$95.55	\$128.79
29-1067	Surgeons	519	669	150	28.9	9	7	15	31	Doctoral or profes	None	Internship/tes	\$111.21	\$56.40	\$137.91	\$27.44	\$46.55	\$103.66	\$132.10	\$183.94
29-1071	Physician Assistants	1,817	2,527	710	39.1	38	77	71	186	Master's degree	None	None	\$46.67	\$26.32	\$56.84	\$15.22	\$40.73	\$51.12	\$59.49	\$66.27
29-1081	Podiatrists	78	88	10	12.8	2	2	1	5	Doctoral or profes	None	Internship/tes	\$63.71	\$19.32	\$95.61	\$19.98	\$23.64	\$66.48	\$80.27	\$108.49
29-1122	Occupational Therapists	1,935	2,450	515	26.6	45	61	52	158	Master's degree	None	None	\$42.39	\$30.50	\$48.33	\$27.89	\$35.14	\$42.83	\$49.99	\$57.95
29-1123	Physical Therapists	3,011	3,864	853	28.3	66	72	85	223	Doctoral or profes	None	None	\$44.81	\$33.19	\$50.62	\$32.10	\$37.08	\$44.36	\$52.17	\$60.66
29-1126	Respiratory Therapists	2,628	3,161	533	20.3	68	66	53	187	Associate's degre	None	None	\$29.65	\$24.30	\$32.32	\$23.12	\$25.70	\$29.30	\$34.07	\$37.93
29-1127	Speech-Language Pathologists	2,756	3,499	743	27.0	57	97	74	228	Master's degree	None	Internship/tes	\$41.64	\$26.83	\$49.05	\$25.92	\$29.97	\$38.92	\$52.48	\$64.14
29-1141	Registered Nurses	52,641	65,839	13,198	25.1	1,696	1,288	1,320	4,304	Bachelor's degre	None	None	\$37.88	\$23.65	\$42.00	\$27.18	\$31.88	\$37.49	\$44.54	\$49.16
29-1151	Nurse Anesthetists	2,131	2,753	622	29.2	33	80	62	175	Master's degree	None	None	\$76.07	\$60.96	\$93.63	\$62.32	\$68.04	\$75.80	\$88.12	\$98.78

29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	2,148	3,048	900	41.9	50	74	90	214	Master's degree	None	None	\$60.75	\$42.86	\$63.70	\$41.58	\$48.21	\$57.93	\$68.95	\$78.65
29-2011	Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technol	3,306	4,028	722	21.8	111	111	72	294	Bachelor's degre	None	None	\$26.08	\$16.13	\$31.05	\$14.94	\$18.91	\$25.28	\$32.11	\$38.75
29-2012	Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technol	2,544	3,071	527	20.7	85	85	53	223	Associate's degre	None	None	\$26.07	\$16.13	\$31.04	\$14.93	\$18.90	\$25.27	\$32.10	\$38.73
29-2021	Dental Hygienists	2,629	3,148	519	19.7	104	65	52	221	Associate's degre	None	None	\$33.30	\$25.56	\$37.18	\$23.10	\$30.39	\$34.51	\$38.14	\$42.96
29-2031	Cardiovascular Technologists and Techn	1,585	1,893	308	19.4	45	43	31	119	Associate's degre	None	None	\$24.42	\$15.47	\$26.90	\$14.19	\$16.75	\$20.90	\$31.85	\$38.59
29-2032	Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	1,691	2,274	583	34.5	51	49	58	158	Associate's degre	None	None	\$40.85	\$28.04	\$47.26	\$26.35	\$30.80	\$35.60	\$41.73	\$85.01
29-2034	Radiologic Technologists	3,922	4,924	1,002	25.5	114	110	100	324	Associate's degre	None	None	\$29.61	\$22.66	\$33.09	\$20.84	\$24.92	\$29.76	\$34.77	\$38.05
29-2055	Surgical Technologists	3,129	3,820	691	22.1	113	154	69	336	Postsecondary nc	None	None	\$25.05	\$18.47	\$28.34	\$16.63	\$20.33	\$24.35	\$26.26	\$34.10
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocatio	13,460	16,720	3,260	24.2	532	524	326	1,382	Postsecondary nc	None	None	\$23.45	\$19.57	\$26.40	\$18.20	\$20.29	\$22.70	\$26.05	\$30.00
29-2071	Medical Records and Health Informatio	3,756	4,603	847	22.6	123	124	85	332	Postsecondary nc	None	None	\$21.83	\$13.34	\$24.77	\$11.50	\$15.69	\$20.16	\$27.46	\$34.43
29-3011	Occupational Health and Safety Special	4,764	5,601	837	17.6	115	142	84	341	Bachelor's degre	None	None	\$39.04	\$22.83	\$47.14	\$20.27	\$27.28	\$36.05	\$46.99	\$61.00
41-3021	Insurance Sales Agents	8,364	10,233	1,869	14.2	390	516	127	1,033	High school diplor	None	Moderate-ter	\$23.43	\$12.12	\$23.09	\$10.75	\$13.88	\$18.51	\$24.12	\$50.10
43-5061	Production, Planning, and Expediting Cle	8,626	10,164	1,538	17.8	326	610	154	1,090	High school diplor	None	Moderate-ter	\$25.59	\$15.88	\$30.44	\$15.12	\$18.02	\$23.17	\$30.20	\$33.29
47-2073	Operating Engineers and Other Construct	10,504	12,741	2,237	21.3	444	815	224	1,483	High school diplor	None	Moderate-ter	\$21.12	\$15.30	\$24.03	\$14.10	\$16.41	\$19.10	\$24.91	\$31.58
47-2111	Electricians	19,432	22,445	3,013	15.5	729	1,556	301	2,586	High school diplor	None	Apprenticesh	\$26.57	\$17.29	\$31.21	\$16.02	\$19.23	\$26.25	\$32.08	\$38.75
47-2132	Insulation Workers, Mechanical	1,580	1,863	283	17.9	46	132	28	206	High school diplor	None	Apprenticesh	\$20.78	\$13.83	\$24.26	\$12.66	\$15.90	\$20.90	\$24.73	\$29.73
47-2152	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	14,522	17,420	2,898	20.0	579	1,068	290	1,937	High school diplor	None	Apprenticesh	\$25.85	\$17.55	\$29.99	\$16.19	\$19.28	\$25.70	\$30.68	\$37.13
47-2211	Sheet Metal Workers	3,204	3,945	741	23.1	124	245	74	443	High school diplor	None	Apprenticesh	\$22.41	\$14.20	\$26.52	\$12.54	\$16.00			

## Scholarship Occupations List

The Scholarship Occupations list is a subset of the High-Skill, High-Growth list. We've focused this list - the one we will use in our career offices to help guide staff in putting our dollars into scholarships - on those occupations for which we can provide about two years of support for a successful outcome. All of the Scholarship Occupations come from the High-Skill, High-Growth list and are those currently in demand in our target industries and range of others.

**Modifying the List:** An employer or group of employers with a demand for skilled workers can ask us at any time to modify our list. We will discuss with employers their shortage occupations, expected numbers of hires, wages and training requirements.

We also use our employer service sales and marketing staff and any updates to published labor market data to check on new or emerging shortage occupations that might be added to our list.

**Current Status:** The Gulf Coast Workforce Board is in the process of revising our Scholarship Occupations list. We will provide TWC with an updated list as soon as that is available.

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## 5. An analysis of the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment needs in in-demand sectors and occupations

### Demand-Driven Workforce System

Since its inception, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board has been committed to building a demand-driven workforce system. We have consistently demonstrated this commitment through policies and actions that include:

- Defining a demand-driven workforce system, identifying employers as the primary but not exclusive customers of the system
- Recognizing the 13-county area as an economically integrated region competing with other such regions

in the international economy

- Setting strategic performance metrics that measure economic results rather than social welfare outcomes for employers and residents
- Creating an Employer Service Committee of the Board to keep attention focused on helping employers solve their workforce problems, especially their labor shortages in-skill occupations
- Designing the regional workforce delivery system from a labor market perspective by recognizing that chronic imbalances in labor markets (i.e., too few or too many workers in an industry or occupation) justify some sort of outside intervention
- Creating separate employer services as the lead component in the regional workforce delivery system, one that actively markets and “sells” workforce solutions to employers
- Starting the problem identification/service delivery process for employers and individuals on the demand side of the labor market equation and offering service that help both compete in the international economy
- Providing basic information and labor market service to all employers but reserving the bulk of available resources to help employers with labor shortages in high-skill occupations in industries that are likely to contribute the most to the region’s economic future
- Using the best available statistical labor market information and local labor market intelligence to target these key industries and high-skill occupations for special attention

The Board developed overarching strategies that further guide the activities of the system. They include:

- Continually improve the quality of customer service
- Provide high-quality labor market information
- Provide skilled workers for employers in critical industries
- Contribute to high-quality, life-long learning experiences
- Use our resources to move the larger regional workforce system to achieve Board-established results
- Meet the requirements of our funding sources
- Improve the work environment in organizations in the regional workforce system including those funded by the Gulf Coast Workforce Board

## Measuring Education Credentials of Middle-Skill Jobs

### Background

The ability to fill the workforce needs of local employers in the Gulf Coast Region has always been a high priority. Workforce demands are constantly undergoing transformations and occupations are increasingly using sophisticated technology driving the necessity for a better educated and skilled workforce. Over the last several years there has been an increasing number of studies on the demand and importance of middle-skilled jobs. The rising numbers of individuals approaching retirement age has only heightened awareness of the region's need to meet workforce demands both now and in the future.

Studies on middle-skill credentials have generally been limited largely due to a lack of ability to track the numerous sources of information, in particular when it comes to privately issued certifications. In recognition of this, the state is attempting to improve data collection and reporting of postsecondary credentials and licenses. This analysis provides a review of occupations by skill level followed by some insight on tracking postsecondary credentials.

## Middle-Skill Jobs

Most studies generally define middle-skill jobs as those requiring some education and training beyond a high school diploma but less than a four-year baccalaureate degree. This postsecondary learning may include college coursework, two-year associate's degrees, certificates, on-the-job training, or apprenticeships. The Bureau of Labor Statistic's typical education, experience, and training requirements by occupation were used to estimate workforce demands in the Gulf Coast Region by skill level. We divided occupations into three categories—low-skill, middle-skill, and high-skill—and examined their respective changes in shares of total employment and shares of projected job openings for three periods: 2000 to 2010, 2010 to 2020, and 2014 to 2024.

- **Low-skill occupations** – those with requirements up to and including a high school diploma and short-term on-the-job training
- **Middle-skill occupations** – those with requirements of an associate's degree or high school diploma and one of the following
  - » Moderate-term on-the-job training
  - » Long-term on-the-job training
  - » Apprenticeship
  - » One year or more experience in a related occupation
  - » Some college, no degree
  - » Postsecondary non-degree award
- **High-skill occupations** – those with requirements of a bachelor's degree or higher

## The Future and Occupations by Skill Level

As of 2016, there were roughly 1,084,066 middle-skill jobs in the Gulf Coast Region with employers needing to fill some 132,611 openings annually.

- By 2026, 60.8 percent of all jobs will require some kind of postsecondary education and training.
- By 2026 the number of middle-skill jobs in the Gulf Coast Region is projected to rise to 1,261,796 representing a 16.4% growth rate over ten years.
- Through 2026, approximately 50.8 percent of all job openings will require education or training beyond high school of which 62.5 percent will be middle-skill jobs.
  - » Low-skills jobs will represent 49.2 percent of job openings, 65,135 annual openings
  - » Middle-skills jobs will represent 31.8 percent of job openings, 44,040 annual openings
  - » High-skills jobs will represent 19.0 percent of job openings, 33,480 annual openings
- By 2026, approximately 60.8 percent of all jobs in the Gulf Coast Region will require education or training beyond high school of which 57.4 percent will be middle-skill jobs.
  - » Low-skills jobs will represent 39.2 percent of all jobs or 1,419,711
  - » Middle-skills jobs will represent 34.9 percent of all jobs or 1,261,796
  - » High-skills jobs will represent 25.9 percent of all jobs or 935,986
- Middle-skill jobs paid an average 83.6 percent higher than low skill jobs in 2017.
  - » Hourly mean wage for low-skill jobs was \$13.54
  - » Hourly mean wage for middle-skill jobs was \$24.86
  - » Hourly mean wage for high-skill jobs was \$46.84

**Gulf Coast Region  
Occupations by Skill Level**

Category	2000 to 2010 Projections				Percent of 2000 Employment	Percent of 2010 Employment	Percent of 10 Year Growth	Annual Openings			Percent of Annual Openings
	2000	2010	Number Growth	Percent Growth				Growth	Repl.	Total	
Low Skill Occupations	1,034,240	1,216,650	182,410	17.6%	40.9%	40.5%	38.4%	18,920	29,935	48,855	45.1%
Middle Skill Occupations	905,290	1,060,610	155,320	17.2%	35.8%	35.3%	32.7%	15,700	18,510	34,210	31.6%
High Skill Occupations	592,080	729,830	137,750	23.3%	23.4%	24.3%	29.0%	13,935	11,260	25,195	23.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,531,610</b>	<b>3,007,090</b>	<b>475,480</b>	<b>18.8%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>48,555</b>	<b>59,705</b>	<b>108,260</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Category	2010 to 2020 Projections				Percent of 2010 Employment	Percent of 2020 Employment	Percent of 10 Year Growth	Annual Openings			Percent of Annual Openings
	2010	2020	Number Growth	Percent Growth				Growth	Repl.	Total	
Low Skill Occupations	1,183,110	1,446,610	263,500	22.3%	41.7%	41.5%	40.9%	26,635	31,125	57,760	44.1%
Middle Skill Occupations	1,065,790	1,285,660	219,880	20.6%	37.5%	36.9%	34.1%	22,070	22,360	44,430	33.9%
High Skill Occupations	589,590	750,610	161,020	27.3%	20.8%	21.6%	25.0%	16,080	12,745	28,825	22.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,838,480</b>	<b>3,482,880</b>	<b>644,400</b>	<b>22.7%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>64,785</b>	<b>66,230</b>	<b>131,015</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Category	2014 to 2024 Projections				Percent of 2014 Employment	Percent of 2024 Employment	Percent of 10 Year Growth	Annual Openings			Percent of Annual Openings
	2014	2024	Number Growth	Percent Growth				Growth	Repl.	Total	
Low Skill Occupations	1,244,400	1,550,000	305,600	24.6%	40.4%	41.1%	44.3%	31,020	34,115	65,135	45.7%
Middle Skill Occupations	1,080,280	1,293,730	213,450	19.8%	35.1%	34.3%	30.9%	21,850	22,190	44,040	30.9%
High Skill Occupations	753,860	925,070	171,210	22.7%	24.5%	24.5%	24.8%	17,080	16,400	33,480	23.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,078,540</b>	<b>3,768,800</b>	<b>690,260</b>	<b>22.4%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>69,950</b>	<b>72,705</b>	<b>142,655</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Category	2016 to 2026 Projections				Percent of 2016 Employment	Percent of 2026 Employment	Percent of 10 Year Growth	Annual Openings			Percent of Annual Openings
	2016	2026	Number Growth	Percent Growth				Growth	Transfers and Exits <sup>1,2</sup>	Total	
Low Skill Occupations	1,214,395	1,419,711	205,316	16.9%	39.4%	39.2%	38.5%	20,531	184,515	205,046	49.2%
Middle Skill Occupations	1,084,066	1,261,796	177,730	16.4%	35.1%	34.9%	33.3%	17,775	114,836	132,611	31.8%
High Skill Occupations	785,680	935,986	150,306	19.1%	25.5%	25.9%	28.2%	15,031	64,427	79,458	19.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,084,141</b>	<b>3,617,493</b>	<b>533,352</b>	<b>17.3%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>53,337</b>	<b>363,778</b>	<b>417,115</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Category	2011 OES Wages			2015 OES Wages			2011 to 2015 Percent Increase in Mean	2017 OES Wages			2011 to 2017 Percent Increase in Mean
	Mean Wage	Entry Wage	Experienced Wage	Mean Wage	Entry Wage	Experienced Wage		Mean Wage	Entry Wage	Experienced Wage	
Low Skill Occupations	\$ 12.42	\$ 9.10	\$ 14.08	\$ 13.04	\$ 9.32	\$ 14.90	5.0%	\$ 13.54	\$ 9.62	\$ 15.51	9.0%
Middle Skill Occupations	\$ 23.03	\$ 14.84	\$ 27.13	\$ 23.79	\$ 14.72	\$ 28.32	3.3%	\$ 24.86	\$ 15.55	\$ 29.52	7.9%
High Skill Occupations	\$ 45.66	\$ 26.24	\$ 55.37	\$ 47.66	\$ 27.59	\$ 57.69	4.4%	\$ 46.81	\$ 27.71	\$ 56.30	2.5%

1. Methodology for calculating annual job openings were changed with the release of 2016 to 2026 projections with a new set of definitions. The new methodology resulted in a larger number of annual openings. The use of new methodology places a break in the data series making comparison of annual openings with prior projections not applicable.

2. Occupational transfers are the projected number of workers leaving an occupation and transferring to a different occupation. Transfers represent permanent separations from an occupation, not temporary movements where the worker is expected to return to the same occupation in the future.

3. Labor force exits are the projected number of workers leaving an occupation and exiting the labor force entirely. Labor force exits are more common at older ages as workers retire, but can occur at any age. Labor force exits are not necessarily permanent exits from the labor force; for example, some workers exit the labor force to pursue additional education with the intention of returning to the labor force. They do represent permanent separations from an occupation.

Note: Source TWC LMCI Dept. For several occupations where wages were not available data was used from JobsEQ. For SOC 25-3097 Teachers and Instructors, All Other, Except Substitute Teachers wage data was used from EMSI.

*Data source Texas Workforce Commission LMCI Dept.*

The Gulf Coast Region includes the following 13 Texas counties: Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Colorado, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Matagorda, Montgomery, Walker, Waller and Wharton.

## Measuring Workforce Credentials – Middle-Skill Occupations

### Data Sources and Limitations

#### National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)

The NCES operates several databases that gather and report on educational statistics. One report that we currently use to track certificate and award completions is the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), which gathers data from every postsecondary educational, technical, and vocational institution in the nation that participates in any federal student aid program. This data set is the most inclusive available however, since it does not track privately issued credentials aggregates derived represent a very conservative estimate of middle skill credentials issued in the Gulf Coast Region during any given time-frame.

#### Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB)

The THECB also tracks certificate and award completions. The data is the same as provided by IPEDS and can be found at their website as part of the Perkins Core Indicator Data set. The limitations to data from THECB are:

- Lacks the ability to make a distinction between each type of credential earned
- Does not provide data from the many private educational, technical, and vocational institutions that is available when using IPEDS
- Only available in pdf format

The THECB also provides licensure testing results for approved technical associate degree and certificate programs leading to professions requiring licensure or certification at community and technical colleges across the state. Data is available from 2008 to 2014. Limitations are:

- Many state agencies do not track licensure examination results by college
- Does not provide results for four-year universities
- Licenses obtained outside of community colleges are not tracked

## Texas Education Agency (TEA)

The Texas Education Agency collects data on certifications awarded to senior high school students. Data collection on certifications awarded to high school students is at an early stage. Growth in the number awarded have increased exponentially in recent years as districts have focused more on making these opportunities available due to federal Perkins accountability on technical skill attainment.

## Degrees, Certifications, and Award Completions – Results

According to available data from the National Center for Educational Statistics, during the 2016 to 2017 academic year, there were 39,999 middle-skill degrees and certifications awarded in the Gulf Coast Region. The number of middle skill degrees and certifications awarded during the 2016 to 2017 academic years represented a 58.6 percent increase from 25,216 awarded during the 2008 to 2009 academic year.

- The number of associate degrees experienced the largest and fastest growth from the 2008 to 2009 academic year to the 2016 to 2017 academic year, up 13,023 or 126.0 percent.
- The number of certifications awarded for at least 1 but less than 2 academic years experienced the second largest growth from the 2008 to 2009 academic year to the 2016 to 2017 academic year, up 2,611 or 42.7 percent.
  - » The number of certificates awarded peaked during the 2010 to 2011 academic year at 10,400 during the tail end of the Great Recession.
  - » Over a four-year period, by the 2014 to 2015 academic year, the number of certifications was negatively impacted during rapid economic growth experiencing a 29.9 percent decline, down 3,109.

**The number of certifications awarded for less than one academic year experienced a net decline from the 2008 to 2009 academic year to the 2016 to 2017 academic year, down by 851 or 9.7 percent. During The Great Recession, in the 2009 to 2010 academic year, the number of certifications peaked at 10,189.**

### Results – Key Finding

The number of certifications issued below the level of an associate degree declines during economic expansion and rises during economic contraction in the region depending on the availability of easy access jobs. As a result, the number of middle-skill awards and certifications awarded as a percentage of all levels of awards and certifications declines during economic expansion and rises during economic contraction.

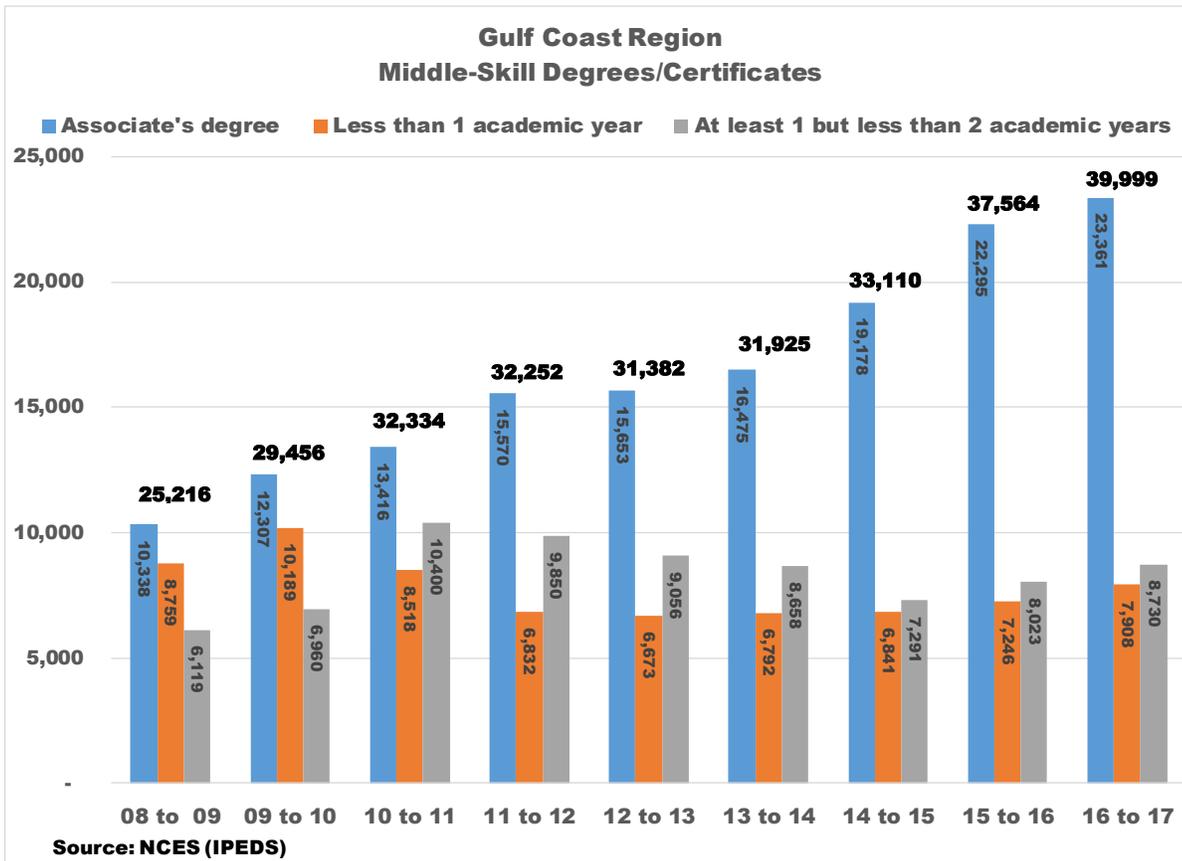
**Total Middle-Skill Degrees/Certificates**

	08 to 09	09 to 10	10 to 11	11 to 12	12 to 13	13 to 14	14 to 15	15 to 16	16 to 17	Number Increase (08 - 09) to (16 - 17)	Percent Increase (08- 09) to (13 - 14)
Associate's degree	10,338	12,307	13,416	15,570	15,653	16,475	19,178	22,295	23,361	13,023	126.0%
Less than 1 academic year	8,759	10,189	8,518	6,832	6,673	6,792	6,841	7,246	7,908	(851)	-9.7%
At least 1 but less than 2 academic year:	6,119	6,960	10,400	9,850	9,056	8,658	7,291	8,023	8,730	2,611	42.7%
<b>Total middle-skill degrees/certificates</b>	<b>25,216</b>	<b>29,456</b>	<b>32,334</b>	<b>32,252</b>	<b>31,382</b>	<b>31,925</b>	<b>33,310</b>	<b>37,564</b>	<b>39,999</b>	<b>14,783</b>	<b>58.6%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>52,357</b>	<b>56,299</b>	<b>60,427</b>	<b>61,249</b>	<b>59,898</b>	<b>63,348</b>	<b>66,105</b>	<b>70,837</b>	<b>73,864</b>	<b>21,507</b>	<b>41.1%</b>
Percentage of Total Degrees/Certificates	48.2%	52.3%	53.5%	52.7%	52.4%	50.4%	50.4%	53.0%	54.2%	68.7%	

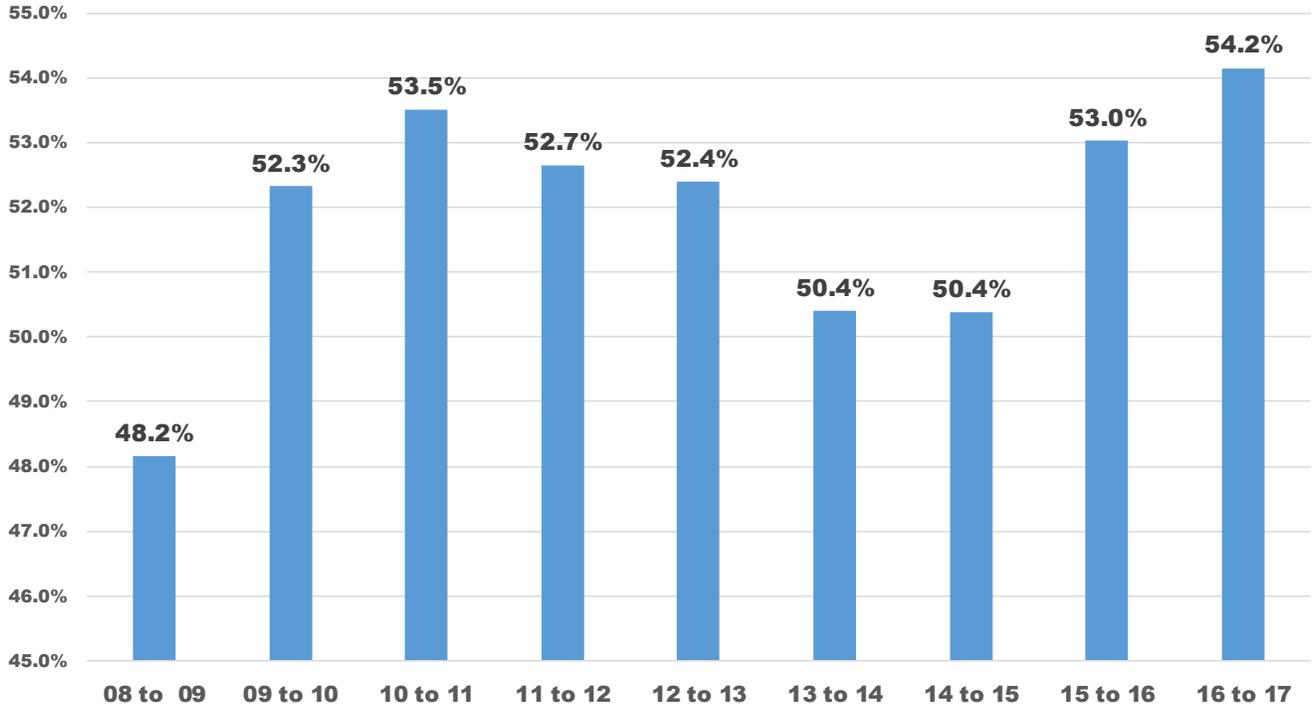
**Growth (Decline) From Previous Academic Year**

	09 to 10	10 to 11	11 to 12	12 to 13	13 to 14	14 to 15	15 to 16	16 to 17
Associate's degree	1,969	1,109	2,154	83	822	2,703	3,117	1,066
Less than 1 academic year	1,430	(1,671)	(1,686)	(159)	119	49	405	662
At least 1 but less than 2 academic year	841	3,440	(550)	(794)	(398)	(1,367)	732	707
<b>Total middle-skill degrees/certificates</b>	<b>4,240</b>	<b>2,878</b>	<b>(82)</b>	<b>(870)</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>1,385</b>	<b>4,254</b>	<b>2,435</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3,942</b>	<b>4,128</b>	<b>822</b>	<b>(1,351)</b>	<b>3,450</b>	<b>2,757</b>	<b>4,732</b>	<b>3,027</b>

Source: NCES (IPEDS)

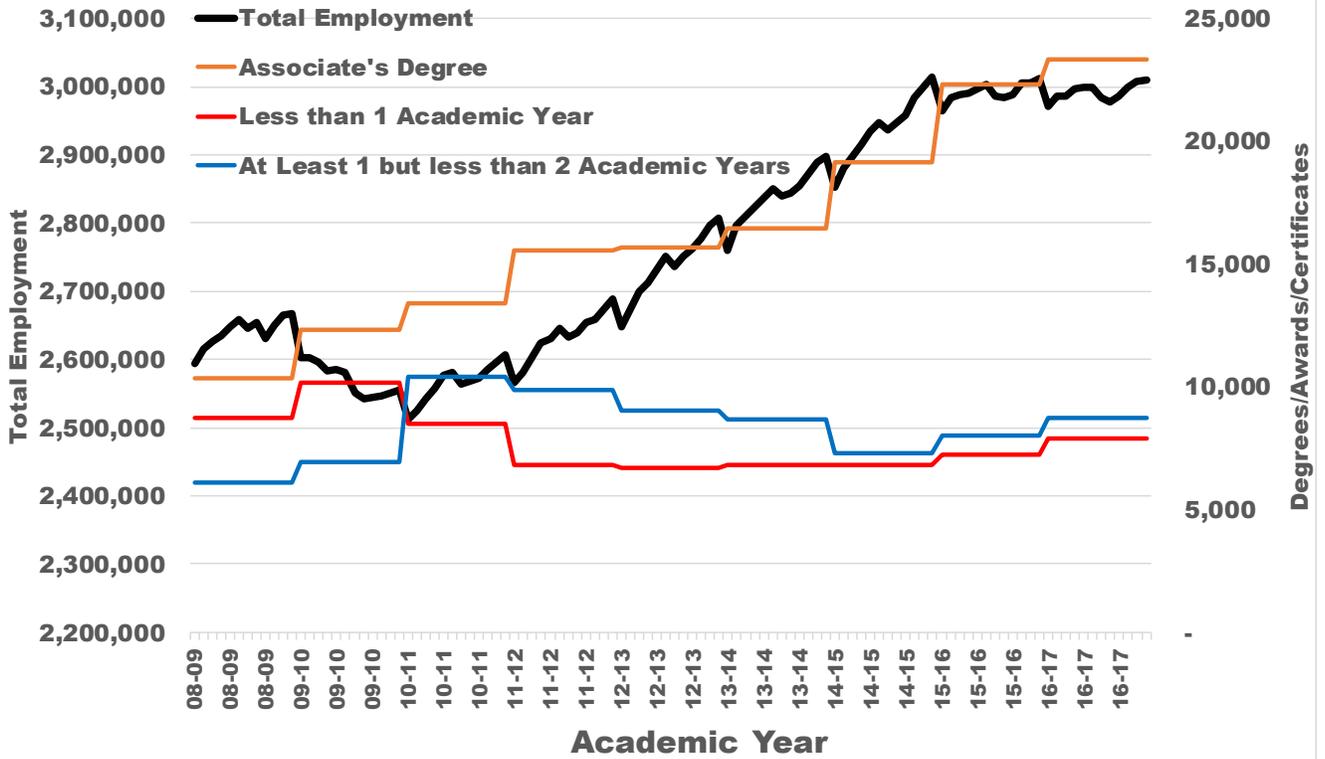


**Gulf Coast Region  
Middle-Skill Degrees/Certificates  
Percentage of Total Degrees/Certificates  
By Academic Year**



**Source: NCES (IPEDS)**

### Gulf Coast Region Degrees/Awards/Certifications by Academic School Year



Source: Texas Workforce Commission LMCI and NCES (IPEDS)

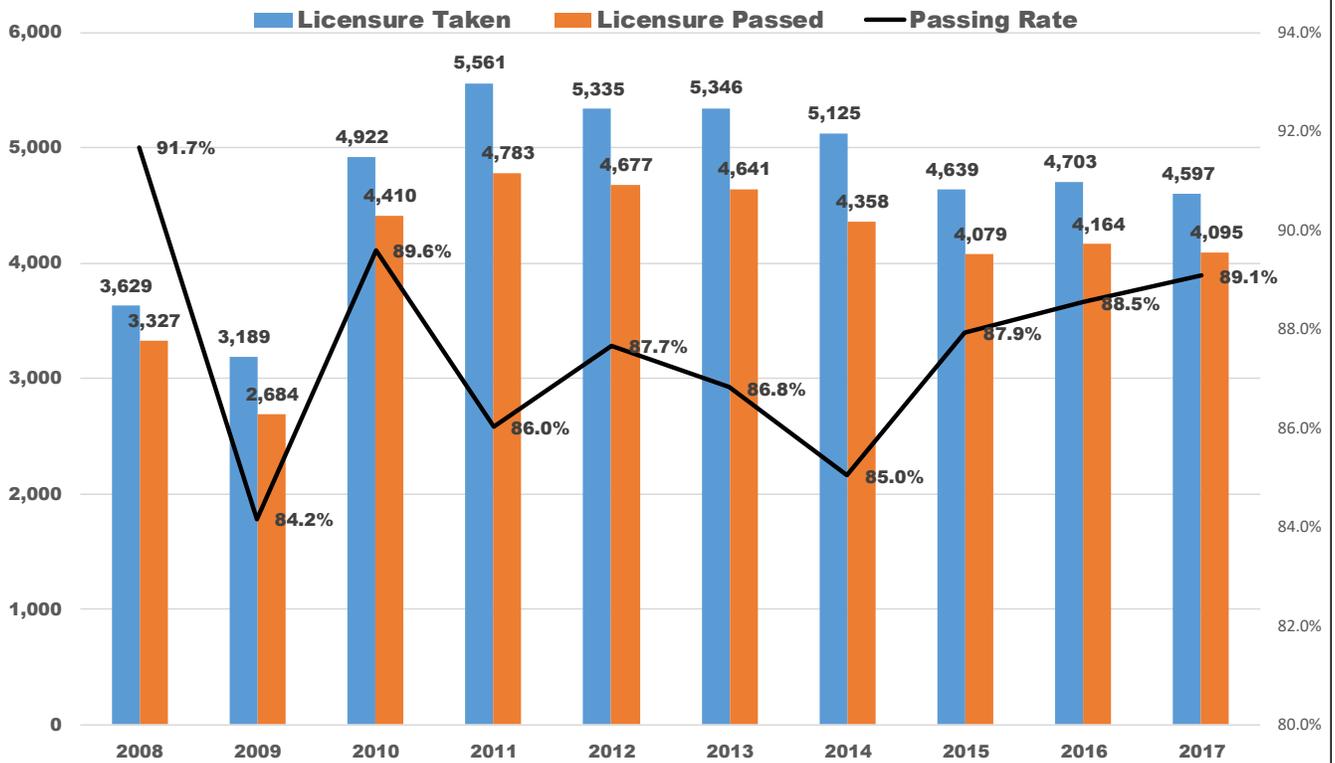
## Licensure Testing Results

Data from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board was extracted for each year from 2008 to 2017. Validity of the data has been difficult to confirm. The data provided primarily represents licensures taken and passed at community colleges, not all institutions or licensing agencies participate in the report.

Additional notes on the data:

- The total number of licensures passed peaked in 2011 as the Gulf Coast Region entered a period of rapid expansion. The total number of licensures passed was down by 688 from the 2011 peak in 2017, down 14.4 percent.
- Passing rates were at their highest during the first sampling year at 91.7 percent and have since declined an average 1.12 percent each year to 85.0 percent in 2014. Since 2014, the passing rate has risen steadily reaching 89.1 percent by 2017.
- Twenty of the top twenty-five licensures were in the health care field.
- Numerous community colleges provided limited or in some cases no data for 2008 and 2009 affecting numerous categories. Strong declines were found across most licensure categories as a result for 2009, particularly in the area of registered nursing, licensed practical nursing, and pharmacy technicians.
  - » While data from 2010 forward appears to be fairly consistent, the ability to analyze or identify definitive trends is not possible across licensure categories.
- Results from several categories represent a very small portion of the actual numbers licensed each year, for example:
  - Medical assistants
  - Dental hygienists
  - Dental assistants
  - Phlebotomy technician

### Annual Licensure Reporting Results Community Colleges in Gulf Coast Region



\*Data was limited and in some cases missing for 2008 and 2009.

**Source: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board**

**Gulf Coast Region**

**2017 Top 25 Annual Licensures at Community Colleges**

Major	2008*	2009*	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Registered Nursing/Registered Nurse	816	557	999	1,027	1,115	1,075	882	913	960	998
Emergency Medical Technology/Technician (EMT Paramedic)	259	396	751	864	866	702	858	771	723	646
Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurse Training	489	198	309	426	385	428	415	340	367	341
Cosmetology/Cosmetologist, General	470	411	379	478	426	430	372	352	359	339
Fire Science/Firefighting	202	224	389	337	310	317	246	239	305	326
Criminal Justice/Police Science	270	208	476	488	287	344	237	201	236	289
Radiologic Technology/Science - Radiographer	127	143	158	126	143	164	174	166	211	158
Pharmacy Technician/Assistant	102	36	83	192	196	195	133	122	94	104
Diagnostic Medical Sonography/Sonographer and Ultrasound Technicia	23	24	35	41	64	64	46	65	84	97
Physical Therapist Technician/Assistant	80	34	67	84	90	87	98	92	106	89
Respiratory Care Therapy/Therapist	97	37	72	82	90	96	129	85	82	81
Surgical Technology/Technologist	38	44	60	61	80	64	76	77	68	74
Medical/Clinical Assistant	25	13	23	18	36	42	71	102	57	60
Facial Treatment Specialist/Facialist	26	4	28	80	41	49	39	45	48	57
Occupational Therapist Assistant	41	11	53	48	47	48	53	57	49	55
Massage Therapy/Therapeutic Massage	8	3	5	6	9	9	9	29	31	39
Dental Hygiene/Hygienist	33	20	35	35	42	62	49	45	46	37
Clinical/Medical Laboratory Technician	17	23	28	31	30	26	37	27	23	34
Nursing Assistant/Aide and Patient Care Assistant/Aide	na	na	na	na	na	95	na	48	41	33
Nuclear Medical Technology/Technologist	22	16	14	17	13	21	17	24	36	30
Dental Assisting/Assistant	11	12	14	21	16	25	48	37	42	28
Medical Radiologic Technology/Science - Radiation Therapist	40	na	36	48	50	51	46	27	25	26
Cosmetology, Barber/Styling, and Nail Instructor		171	65	28	24	21	10	52	24	22
Health Information/Medical Records Technology/Technician	24	5	22	8	18	23	24	21	12	19
Aesthetician/Esthetician and Skin Care Specialist	11	5	6	17	15	1	10	7	10	18
<b>Total Licensures</b>	<b>3,327</b>	<b>2,684</b>	<b>4,410</b>	<b>4,783</b>	<b>4,677</b>	<b>4,641</b>	<b>4,358</b>	<b>4,079</b>	<b>4,164</b>	<b>4,095</b>

\*Data was limited and in some cases missing for 2008 and 2009.

**Source: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board**

**6. An analysis of the regional workforce, including 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 employment**

**Employment**

As of October 2018, the Houston metropolitan statistical area, which comprises the majority of the Gulf Coast WDA, was finishing out a year of strong job growth following the local downturn related to oil prices that began in late 2014. According to the Current Employment Statistics (CES) survey of non-farm payroll counts, year-over-year job growth now stands at 114,400 compared to 56,100 in November of 2017. The three sectors leading this recovery are: Professional and Business Services (31,700), Construction (24,000), and Manufacturing (14,000).

## Unemployment

The Houston MSA (not-seasonally-adjusted) unemployment rate stood at 3.8 percent in November 2018, unchanged from October 2018 and down from 4.4 percent a year ago. This places the local unemployment rate above the statewide and national rates of 3.5 percent. There were 128,727 individuals unemployed in Houston in November, which marks a decrease from 147,296 in November 2017. The net number of unemployed individuals in Houston is now lower compared to the most recent low of 132,316 in December 2014, i.e. there are fewer unemployed individuals currently than prior to the start of the most recent local downturn related to falling oil prices.

## Educational Attainment

Based on the most current 2017 1-year American Community Survey (ACS) estimates, educational attainment among Houston area residents age 25 and over was as follows: 16.4 percent possess less than a high school diploma, 23.2 percent possess a high school diploma or equivalent, 20.7 percent have completed some college without obtaining a degree, 7.2 percent possess an associate's degree, while 32.7 percent possess a bachelor's degree or higher.

## Populations with Barriers to Employment

### Disabilities

In the Houston area among all individuals in the labor force 16 and over, 5.9 percent were unemployed according to the 2017 1-year estimates from the American Community Survey. However, among the subset of the labor force with a disability, 13.8 percent were unemployed for a rate more than double that of the population at-large. In terms of labor force participation, 66 percent of individuals across the entire civilian noninstitutionalized population of the region were either in possession of paid work or actively seeking work while unemployed. The participation rate among individuals with disabilities was significantly lower at 44.7 percent.

### Poverty

Among the 6.8 million residents in the Houston area for whom poverty status could be determined, nearly 950,000, or 13.9 percent, were classified as living below the poverty line according to the 2017 1-year estimates from the American Community Survey. The poverty rate among females stood at 15.3 percent compared to 12.5 percent among males. Children under five years of age had the highest poverty rate of 22.2 percent among the age groups for which data were available. Poverty rates by race and/or ethnicity ranged from 7.7 percent among those identifying as Asian alone, to 12.9 percent among Whites Alone, to 13.7 percent among those of Two or More Races, to 24.2 percent among Americans Indians and Alaska Natives Alone, to 18.4 percent among Blacks or African Americans Alone. Poverty rates among individuals identifying as Some Other Race Alone and those of Hispanic or Latino Origin of any race were 19.5 percent and 20.1 percent respectively.

### **Households Receiving Food Stamps/SNAP**

Partially related to measures of poverty is the share of households receiving food stamps also known as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). According to the 2017 1-year estimates from the American Community Survey, 12 percent of the approximately 2.3 million households in the Houston area were beneficiaries of this program. When considering household types, only 7 percent of married-couple families were SNAP recipients while the rate increased to 20 percent among male householders with no wife present and 33 percent among female householders with no husband present. Among households below the poverty line, 41 percent were SNAP recipients. Participation in the food stamp program by race and/or ethnicity were as follows: Asian Alone (4.2 percent), White Alone (9 percent), Two or More Races (14 percent), Some Other Race Alone (17 percent), Hispanic or Latino Origin of Any Race (17 percent), Black or African American Alone (22 percent), and American Indian and Alaska Native Alone (27 percent).

### **Language**

As a reflection of Houston's diversity, the 2017 1-year estimates from the American Community Survey indicate that nearly 40 percent of the population age five and over speak another language at home other than English. Of those that speak another language, 58 percent reported that they speak English "very well" while the remainder indicated that they speak English less than "very well." The most common language spoken by individuals that indicated that they speak English less than "very well" were Spanish (80 percent),

### **Veterans**

Of the 5 million Houston area residents belonging to the civilian population age 18 and over, roughly

268,000 or 5.3 percent were veterans according to the 2017 1-year estimates from the American Community Survey. The largest group of veterans by period of service were those that served during the Vietnam War (31.5 percent) while the largest age group were those 35 to 54 years (32 percent). Educational attainment among veterans 25 and older provided relatively high with 72 percent in possession of some college or higher compared to 60.3 percent for non-veterans. In contrast to 2015, however, unemployment among veterans was slightly higher than non-veterans (5.8 percent to 6 percent). Lastly, rates of disability were higher among veterans than non-veterans with 26 percent reporting a disability compared to 12 percent for those who did not serve in the armed forces.

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## **7. An analysis of workforce development activities in the region, including education and training.**

Note: This analysis must include the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities and an evaluation of the effectiveness of programs and services. It must evaluate the Board's capacity to provide workforce development activities to address the identified education and skills needs of the workforce. The analysis must include individuals with barriers to employment. The analysis also must address the employment needs of employers.

### **Building Stronger Community Partnerships**

The Gulf Coast region is big and a good deal of money flows into the region supporting a solid foundation of resources and services. There are 76 school districts, 10 community colleges and several well-known universities in the region. Our community colleges provide a significant number of workforce training programs, and continue to be awarded Skills Development Fund contracts.

The Board's strategy is to become better connected to other stakeholders in the region. Better connections mean stronger partnerships, and stronger partnerships help all parties to "divide and conquer." For the Workforce Board, this means its funds will go farther, and move the system closer to achieving its goals.

### **Support for Key Industries**

A fundamental strategy of the Board is to support the region's key industries by making significant investments to targeted industries. The Board employs full time staff as Education, Construction/Crafts and Advanced Manufacturing /Supply Logistics Industry Liaisons. Their goal is to partner with specific

employers in high growth, high skill Gulf Coast industry sectors. The Liaisons work to meet employers' current and future workforce needs by coordinating regional agency services, training, and education to fulfill skill needs. Industry Liaisons work to support changes in structures and policies to more closely align and integrate workforce, education, and economic development programs to better serve Gulf Coast employers. They provide Board representation and expertise to economic development and industry-led workforce initiatives.

We recognize that the Energy Industry Cluster is a key industry to our region as well as to the state; however, with the current oil and gas downturn, most of the Board's efforts in this industry cluster has revolved around helping employers and individuals laid off from these industries weather the current crisis.

When the price of oil plunged below \$30 per barrel, our region's workforce felt the effects. Thousands of highly-trained individuals have been laid off and are struggling to find employment as more and more companies announce workforce reductions. The Gulf Coast Workforce Board launched Gulf Coast Oil & Gas Initiative aimed specifically at those individuals. The goal of the program is to find employers in other industries that are looking for highly-trained individuals to meet their needs and match them with job-seekers from the state's database, WorkInTexas.com.

The Gulf Coast Oil & Gas Initiative will assist 500 job seekers displaced from the oil and gas industry through a virtual office. The services offered include resume critique, transitional occupation analysis, tools and seminars designed to help with their search, as well as specialized training and OJT opportunities.

Workforce Solutions will find employers in other industries that are looking for highly-trained individuals to meet their needs and match them with job-seekers from the state's database, WorkinTexas.com. In addition to having access to the largest database of job seekers, this initiative will also assist companies with recruitment, pre-screening applicants, hiring events and specialized training. The team provides matches to those businesses with the appropriate Oil and Gas customers based on their previous experience. They also work with WIT and attend job fairs.

As the Oil and Gas Initiative continues to expand its connection to displaced oil and gas workers and introduce Workforce Solutions services to them, we see two areas that need attention for the unit to increase its success helping workers transition to new industries;

- Employer outreach and education about the talent available to them from the displaced oil and gas worker pools
- Add recruiting services specializing in transitioning displaced oil and gas workers to new industries,

similar to what we did at the Aerospace Transition Unit and the Sealy Transition Center

### **Trio Electric**

One way the GCWB supports key industries is through pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs. The GCWB worked with Trio Electric LLC to develop a pre-apprenticeship program to introduce secondary school students and others to the possibilities of high-skill trades and promote them as viable career options. The program leveraged a variety of partners including the Gulf Coast Workforce Board and Spring Branch ISD. TRIO worked directly with Spring Branch ISD to offer students a two-week “boot camp” that familiarized them with the host of skilled-trades technical positions.

As a result of their participation in the program, TRIO Electric was able to offer 40 students a summer internship with the company at \$13/hour. Additionally, in the Fall of 2018, an additional 50 high school juniors enrolled in the program with Spring Branch ISD. The annual evaluation completed by the students overwhelmingly stated that the students felt prepared and felt as though they had a firm direction towards their careers. The program has been such a success that TRIO is replicating the pre-apprenticeship model in Austin and Grand Prairie.

### **Support for Target Occupations**

Perhaps the most critical step in supporting the Board’s High-Skill, High-Growth Occupations is through the targeting process itself. The right occupations need to be on the list, those for which there is a shortage of workers, and that is accomplished through a thorough targeting process.

The Board continues to build a robust network of approved vendors and educational programs. We have developed clear policies and procedures for Workforce Solutions staff to use when awarding scholarships to help customers pay for school that prepares them for a career in an occupation we support through scholarships. Through this vendor network, we can award scholarships to customers, who might not otherwise be able to go to school. These Scholarships prepare them for meaningful careers in occupations that are in high-demand in the region’s key industries.

### **Getting People Back to Work**

Several years ago, the Board developed a Placement Team that consists of 12 employment counselors working out of a central location. Daily, the team pulls an Unemployment Insurance claimant list, and contacts new claimants. Working by phone and email, the team helps customers clean up WorkInTexas.com applications, develop good resumes and find solid job leads.

Staff contacts all customers in the Rapid Reemployment Service database (profiled pool) by sending letters of introduction asking them to contact Workforce Solutions by phone, email or in person. The Board has

on staff an outplacement specialist who is often a first responder working with employers to assess needs, and coordinate service for affected workers. Workforce Solutions usually provides job search workshops with modules on resume preparation, interviewing and using WorkInTexas.com.

We maintain a Regional Team that provides Workforce Solutions seminars and workshops at community locations such as public libraries. The Regional Team made up of Navigators and Facilitators that go out in to the community to reach populations that might not be served in a local career office. The Regional Team works with our partners to conduct community-based job search seminars and workshops. These presentations are conducted outside the career office in schools, libraries, and a wide range of community based organizations.

Good employment counselors help customers identify knowledge and skills that can be applied to different jobs and similar jobs in different industries. Our training contractor, Learning Designs, Inc. (LDI), delivers training that teaches employment counselors to move beyond computer-generated matches from WorkInTexas.com to analyzing those matches to pick the best people possible for each job. Staff are taught how to help customers identify their transferable skills, develop resumes and complete job applications highlighting those skills, and look for jobs that demand those skills. The analytical skills developed through this process can be applied to helping customers identify their unique, marketable, and transferable skills. We now provide at least one class a month of Working with Job Ready Customers that trains staff in precisely this function - helping customers find good jobs that match their skills.

The Board also asked LDI to develop and deliver a series of industry-specific training courses for staff. The training talks about the industry, jobs, skill sets, and transferable skills. There is a basic labor market intelligence course that provides staff with a foundational knowledge of the labor market and resources to learn more about it. There are industry-specific courses for health services, educational services, and industrial crafts.

The Board's philosophy is that workforce development is a component of economic development, and all of our activities reflect this philosophy. We measure our ability to help create jobs and help employer customers become more competitive. Our work with economic development organizations includes partnering on industry-based work groups, sharing planning and evaluation information, coordinating grant proposals, and assisting in bringing new businesses to the region and retraining and supporting existing businesses. The Board works closely with economic development partners to identify long-range issues such as the changing demographics of the region's workforce and a trend to lower educational achievement; and shorter-range issues such as finding transportation solutions across the region so employers can get the workers they need.

Below is a list of economic development organizations that work with the Board.

Central Fort Bend Chamber Alliance	Sealy Chamber of Commerce
Brazosport Area Chamber of Commerce	Greater Houston Women's Chamber of Commerce
Asian Chamber of Commerce	Houston Northwest Chamber of Commerce
Galveston Chamber of Commerce	Greater Houston Black Chamber of Commerce
The Woodlands Area Chamber of Commerce	Clear Lake Area Chamber of Commerce
Baytown Chamber of Commerce	Greater Conroe/Lake Conroe Area Chamber of Commerce
Greater Houston Partnership	Houston East End Chamber of Commerce
Katy Area Chamber of Commerce	Economic Development Alliance for Brazoria County
Bay City Chamber of Commerce	Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership
Houston Intercontinental Chamber of Commerce	Pearland Economic Development Corporation
Wharton Chamber of Commerce	Greater Tomball Area Chamber of Commerce
Palacios Chamber of Commerce	The Woodlands Area Economic Development Council
Pearland Chamber of Commerce	Columbus Chamber of Commerce
Economic Alliance Houston Port Region	Galveston County

## Education Sector

Below is a brief discussion of some of the projects the Board is involved with in the Education Industry Sector:

### Summer Teacher Externships

Beginning in the Summer of 2019, the GCWB will host 30 teachers and counselors from across the region in a summer externship project that allows participants to interact with hospitals to learn about occupations, HR, and other functions within the health care industry. At the end of the externship, teachers are required to develop lesson plans to implement with students in the Fall of 2019.

### Teacher Externships 2015 and 2016

The first year (2015) the GCWB hosted 20 teachers and counselors from Pasadena ISD, Deer Park ISD, and AAMA Charter Schools across 6 worksites focusing on the Logistics industry. Teachers and counselors spent half and full day sessions at each worksite job shadowing, helping to create and ship/move products, and learning about the cycles of manufacturing and distribution and how they intersect in the Logistics field.

The session started with a half-day overview of the industry and regional labor markets by Sr. Regional Economist, Parker Harvey. The ten-day session ended with the educators providing demonstration lessons to the group inspired by the jobs they learned about and as relevant to their specific teaching or counseling area(s).

The second year (2016), the same model was carried forward with 30 teachers and counselors focusing this time on the Healthcare industry. Cypress Fairbanks, Spring Branch, Katy, Alief, and Houston ISDs as well as KIPP Charter Schools provided participants. The worksite experiences occurred at private practice physician offices and throughout the Harris Health System. Part of the 2016 externship included a school-year evening and weekend iteration of the project to pilot a different pacing and timing for implementation.

### **J.P. Morgan Chase College and Career Institutes 2015 and 2016**

Project GRAD's College and Career Institutes, with the funding and support of JP Morgan Chase, Workforce Solutions, and local community colleges, provided rising juniors and seniors with the opportunity to explore what college is like and what training and education is necessary for various careers.

Nine institutes were held at Lone Star College (North Harris, Cy Fair, and University Park), Houston Community College (Southeast, Stafford, Northeast and Coleman), San Jacinto College (South and Central), and Lee College (Liberty) serving 800 students entering grades 9-12 from 18 school districts and 6 charter or private schools.

Each student received at least 4 hours of college preparation instruction from Project GRAD and 8 hours of Workforce Preparation and Labor Market instruction from Workforce Solutions including identification of skills, interests, and values, job search skills such as interviewing, resume writing, networking, and application completion, and the utilization of current and relevant LMI in college and career decision making and life planning. Students were given at least 8 hours of instruction in at least 3 of the following industry/occupation tracks:

Robotics	Machining	Pipefitting
Welding	Drilling Simulation	Maritime Logistics
3D Modeling	HVAC Technology	Fluid Mechanics
Lean Manufacturing	Logistics and Supply Chain	Manufacturing Technology
AutoCAD	Design Engineering	Construction Technology
Petroleum Field Services	Electrical Technology	

The participating employers were a necessary component of the institutes also. They provided in-depth knowledge about specific careers and a perspective that students would not otherwise receive throughout their career decision-making process.

More than 140 volunteers participated from more than 40 small, medium, and large businesses in the region over the last 3 years:

Barri Financial Group	NBA Referees Association
Breakthrough Consulting	Northwest Assistance Ministries
Brickman Group	Occupational Safety Council of America -
Carmax	Pasadena Police Department
CenterPoint Energy	Patterson-UTI Drilling
City of Houston, Public Works and Engineering	PepsiCo
Comcast	PFS Investments
CVS	Port of Houston Authority
Cypress Fairbanks ISD	Primerica
Energy Future Holdings	R.R. Donnelly
Federal Bureau of Investigation	RECON
Green Mountain Energy	Schlumberger
Harris County Toll Road Authority	Shell
Heath Consultants	Southwest Shipyard
Houston Police Department	Tellepsen
Hudson Group	The Law Offices of Pierre-Louis
Igloo Corporation	Thermon
Industrial Information Resources	TXU Retail Services
International Union of Oper. Eng. (IUOE) Local	United Machine Works
JP Morgan Chase	Wells Fargo
KRBE (Radio Station)	YMCA
MRC Global	

## **Young Aspiring Professionals Project – Department of Labor Demonstration Grant Serving Disconnected Youth**

The Young Aspiring Professional Project (YAP) models the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act’s job-driven priorities for out-of-school youth through a sustainable, multi-dimensional worksite-based platform – designed to reengage at least 100 disconnected youth with both education and workforce opportunities that lead to improved income and employability. We work with an eligible population of out-of-school youth, between the ages of 18 and 29, who reside in the Settegast and Denver Harbor neighborhoods or who come from Houston ISD’s Wheatley, Scarborough, and Kashmere High Schools feeder patterns. Priority is given to homeless, truant, court-involved, transient and foster youth. Relying on an aggressive community-based outreach and ongoing engagement system, individuals are recruited in cohorts from a number of organizations that provide mentorship and social assistance.

The project combines work-based learning, career pathways education, and existing sector initiatives to achieve its anticipated results. Targeted industries for this project include manufacturing, construction, and logistics with the special emphasis on occupations with clearly defined career pathways that include multiple skill certifications and tiered advancement opportunities.

## **Young Aspiring Professionals Project – Department of Labor Demonstration Grant Serving Disconnected Youth:**

- Immediate employment in subsidized Paid Work Experience (PWE) and On the Job Training (OJT)
- On-site Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) and contextualized skills training
- 24/7 cohort-based mentor engagement
- Credit-to-completion and credential attainment

The goal is to enroll at least 100 participants within the first 18 months of service. 80% of enrolled participants are anticipated to complete PWE and entry to AEL. 80% of PWE completers are anticipated to enter employment through the OJT experience or begin postsecondary education. Consequently, we expect at least half of the participants who begin programming to achieve continued employment and/or postsecondary education. As of December 2016, 53 participants have been enrolled and placed into subsidized employment.

### **Alternative Certification/Educational Provider Forum 2014, 2015, 2016**

The GCWB hosts an annual discussion forum that focuses on a salient issue related to teacher quality and the preparation of new (first-time) K-12 teachers. In 2014, the idea was formative and the discussion focused on identifying salient issues. In 2015, the focus was on managing non-pedagogy related administration. In 2016, the focus was on Social Media management and its effect on the total educator presentation to the public. K-12 leadership, teacher preparation program representation, and other individuals invested in public education are invited to the forum. From its inception, attendance has grown from 14 individuals in 2014 to 52 in 2016. The goal of each forum is to connect the preparation providers (supply) to the schools (demand) asking for constantly improving quality in the teacher pipeline. Each year, actionable goals are established to keep connections thriving.

### **Rebuilding Adult Curriculum & Building AEL Curriculum for Job Readiness**

The GCWB is in the process of revising our job readiness curriculum for all audiences so that the delivery and content fit the needs of our diverse customer base. As part of this, the general curriculum offered to adults is being revised to be modular and adaptable to many audiences, including the Adult Education audience and the audience of individuals with disabilities. Accommodations, modifications, and suggested delivery methods are included with each lesson within each thematic module to better serve each customer's needs.

### **Alternative Teacher Certification Program**

In Fall of 2015, the GCWB recruited from a database of about 1000 individuals who held four-year degrees within a targeted geography nearest training providers with Alternative Teacher Certification Programs, namely Houston Community College (Central), Lone Star College, and Region IV Education Service Center. 56 individuals were interested, eligible and selected to begin training toward teacher certification in Secondary STEM, Bilingual, Special, or Career & Technical Education fields. To date, 13 individuals have begun their first year of paid work as a certified probationary teacher, which is the first step toward becoming fully certified in their content area after successfully passing the required examinations. Most of the individuals attended training through Lone Star College which had the most flexibility in course offerings available at the time. The goal of the project was to serve an increasing need for more and better qualified teachers throughout the Gulf Coast region. Projected through 2020, the Gulf Coast region will need more than 83,000 certified teachers, which presents a shortfall of nearly 20,000 job openings versus the currently and projected available labor pipelines.

## **Education Workgroup**

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board sponsors an Education Workgroup of 19 participating school districts. The group meets regularly to discuss the needs of the participating school districts and topics of importance to the group as well as the Board.

## **Industrial Crafts and Construction Industry Sector**

Below is a brief discussion of some of the projects the Board is involved with in the Industrial Crafts and Construction Industry Sector:

### **Jacobs, Inc. 2015-2016**

Local employer, Jacobs, Inc. came to the Gulf Coast Workforce Board with a huge workforce need. They were in the middle of constructing a multi-billion cracker petroleum plant in Baytown, Texas and needed to hire more employees while at the same time, train their current workforce to obtain more national portable credentials. What ensued was a project that encompassed not only hiring new local talent but also provided incumbent workers a career pathway to attain additional skills as they earn while they learn.

Working in collaboration with the Gulf Coast Workforce Board, Workforce Solutions, and other non-profit support agencies, prospective employees are identified and pre-screened for participation in the program. The prospect could be an unemployed or underemployed worker seeking better opportunities through the local workforce development agency, or a U.S military veteran looking for a career that would provide opportunities in a high-wage, high-skill industry. JumpStart benefits the client by providing a safe, skilled workforce from the community local to the project. For trainees, JumpStart provides an opportunity to acquire skills needed to enter the industrial construction industry, and sets the stage for continued development through training. This program allows participants to train for 45-hours, at no cost to the participant other than their time, in preparation to enter the world of industrial construction.

The project officially launched in Fall 2015 and ended in Summer 2016. The results included 307 incumbent workers and 19 JumpStart candidates, for a total of 326 individuals who successfully received a national portable credential for the construction industry; a 30% increase over the grant goal.

### **S&B 2015-2016**

Similar to the Jacobs project, The Gulf Coast Workforce Board worked with a local employer, S&B Engineers and Constructors, Ltd, on targeted recruiting, screening, and selection campaign to incentivize women to enter the construction industry, "Women in Construction". The program consisted of several partners including the Gulf Coast Workforce Board, United Way THRIVE, Workforce Solutions

Astrodome Career Office, Family Houston, and Harris County Dept. of Education. Over 4,000 women were originally emailed and invited to a phone screening phase. During the phone screening, the candidates were asked a pre-qualifying questionnaire and invited to a face-to-face event. At the event, the human resource managers of S&B Engineers and Constructors along with Workforce Solutions and United Way presented and offered them a way to get trained that would result in an industry-recognized certification and direct employment.

Over 80 women attended a face-to-face event at our Astrodome Workforce Career Office on December 19, 2015. The event was very successful and 69 women decided to move forward with the program and elected to take a TABE screening. Of which, 24 women passed all three modules with scores above 80%. S&B Engineers and Constructors selected 19 women as direct hires and started a training program on January 18, 2016. The training ended on April 15, 2016. We had a completion rate of 84% with 16 graduates from the 19 women who originally started with the program. Of the 3 women who didn't complete the training, one moved to Florida to care for family, one resigned due to her spouse's illness, and the last woman was let go due to poor attendance rate. All of the graduates earned NCCER CORE credentials and full-time employment with S&B, Inc.

Last but not least, the women were given supportive services which included financial literacy so that they could learn how to budget, pay down or eliminate debt, and save for the future.

### **Upskill Construction Committee**

The Upskill Construction Committee was formed from the Greater Houston Partnership's Upskill Houston Collaborative. The Upskill program is industry-led workforce development program to fill middle skills jobs and build careers.

### **McKinsey Generation Project 2016**

The McKinsey Generation training platform is a collaborative effort of employer leadership, community based supportive services, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board, and the Greater Houston Partnership's UpSkill Houston to attract, train and place new craft professionals into the construction sector with the key mindsets that employers have identified as crucial for success. This industry-led effort aims to improve safety, performance, and ultimately lower costs. The first training class of 20 students graduated in November 2016 and is interviewing with industry sponsors.

## CDL project 2016

Seven local transportation companies came to the Workforce Board with a desire to collectively hire 400 new drivers within the next two years for local and over-the-road routes. With stricter national and state regulations, an aging population, and low interest in this career, the transportation employers needed assistance to attract and train new talent. We recruited and screen potential candidates based on the employers' hiring criteria. The employers interviewed and selected the candidates. The selected candidates had the option of selecting one of four training providers based on what geographic locations and course schedules. Of the candidates interviewed, 101 were approved for vouchers and enrolled in training. Currently 3 have graduated, 96 are still in training, and 2 left the program. Training programs should be complete by December 31st, 2016.

The program included the following partners:

<b>Partners</b>	
Gulf Coast Workforce Board	
Employers	Comcar, Grocers Supply, Mai True Transport, LTS, Schneider, Averitt, US Xpress
Career Offices	Astrodome, Cypress Station, Northline, Southeast
Training Providers	Alvin, Houston, San Jacinto, Lone Star Colleges
Operational Units	Call Center, Eligibility, Financial Payment, Track and Monitor

The project started in August 2016 and is slated to end in December 2016. Preliminary results indicate we will end the project on time, within budget, and will fulfill all grant milestones.

# PART B: OPERATIONAL ELEMENTS

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## PART B: OPERATIONAL ELEMENTS

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The Operational Elements of the Guidelines are as follows:

1. **A description of the workforce development system in the local area that identifies:**
  - a. the programs that are included in the system; and
  - b. how the Board will support the strategy identified in the State Plan and work with the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs to support alignment to provide services, including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, that support the strategy identified in the State Plan under WIOA §102(b)(1)E).

### **Workforce Development System Description**

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board (GCWB) and its contractors and service providers, forms Workforce Solutions, a workforce development system available to employers, workers, job seekers, and youth in the 13-county Houston-Galveston region. Workforce Solutions provides vital workforce development tools that help workers find and keep good jobs, and help employers hire the skilled workers they need to grow their businesses. Through one-stop centers (i.e., Workforce Solutions offices) across the region, and in collaboration with workforce partners, including community colleges, adult basic education providers, local independent school districts, economic development groups, and other state agencies, Workforce Solutions provides innovative services to support employers and workers. Collaboration and coordination across these agencies and local entities play a critical role in the success of the Gulf Coast workforce system.

## Employer Service Division

Customized services help employers find qualified applicants for specific jobs. We assist with recruiting, screening, referring and testing of job applicants to help simplify the hiring process. Since the original Local Plan was submitted, the Board has added an additional employer service contractor that will positively impact system performance and better service employers in the region.

Workforce Solutions will also help employers strengthen their current workforce as well as get advice on human resource issues and concerns. Workforce Solutions partners with businesses, educational institutions, civic organizations and community leaders to find solutions to labor needs of industries vital to the region and its economy.

We believe that helping employers find skilled workers results in the region's economic development and benefits individual workers. We will help more than 26,000 Gulf Coast employers identify qualified candidates for job openings. Business Service Representatives visit employers to offer services and learn firsthand a business's specific need.

As part of the statewide Texas Workforce Solutions network, we partner with the Texas Workforce Commission and other workforce boards in the largest job-matching database in the state - WorkInTexas.com.

## Career Offices

Offering placement, career counseling and financial aid services, Workforce Solutions operates 24 community-based career offices to help residents find employment or advance their careers. With an increase in its 2019 budget, the Board added a new career office contractor and will open five additional career offices in communities where a need for workforce support has been identified.

Our entire system works to provide individuals, students, parents, teachers, and counselors with current information on labor market data - focusing on high-skill, high-growth jobs that provide opportunities for growth, good wages and a more successful career.

## Programs

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board proposes to align our administration of the below programs with the Texas Combined State Plan.

- The Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs
- The Wagner-Peyser Employment Service (ES) program, including the Agricultural Outreach Plan

- The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act program
- The Vocational Rehabilitation program (the Board has successfully co-located seven Texas Workforce Solutions VR offices with an additional eight VR co-locations planned for 2019.)
- The Senior Community Service Employment Program

Currently, the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) has oversight authority for all of the aforementioned programs. However, the programs discussed in this plan reflect only a portion of the programs administered by the Gulf Coast Workforce Board. Through the integrated workforce system in Texas, the GCWB also manages several other programs administered by TWC:

- Choices [the employment program for recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)]
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T)
- Child Care and Development Block Grant Funds/Child Care Development Funds (CCDBG/CCDF)
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)

Through this highly integrated system, the GCWB intends to implement enhancements that continue to strengthen the region's workforce development system to put more people to work. The plan describes a four-year strategy that spurs skill and credential attainment, employment, retention, and earnings of participants, including those with barriers to employment, resulting in a higher quality workforce, reduced welfare dependency, and increased productivity and competitiveness in the state.

The plan complies with WIOA by aligning its core programs and two optional programs to the state's workforce investment, education, and economic development systems, as discussed in the unified strategic planning requirements, common performance accountability measures, and requirements governing the one-stop delivery system. As WIOA intended, the plan serves as a map to develop, align, and integrate the entire system across federal education, employment, and training programs. The plan enumerates the region's vision and strategic and operational goals for providing workforce services and continuously improving the quality and performance of its system.

## Alignment with State Strategy

The region's workforce system is complex, comprising numerous programs, services, and initiatives administered by the Board, TWC, TWIC, independent school districts, community and technical colleges, and local adult education providers. System partners are responsible for the delivery of a wide range of workforce education and training programs and related services, as well as education programs that support career preparation and advancement.

The system is interrelated because the programs and agencies serve either a common customer or are charged with achieving similar employment and education outcomes for their targeted customer groups. Therefore, the strategic plan is designed to identify and focus on systemic issues that affect multiple parts of the system – either programs or agencies – and that address broad, big-picture workforce issues.

The GCWB is aware of the region's changing demographics and skills gaps, and continues to design programs to meet increasingly complex workforce needs. Through the Workforce Solutions network, the GCWB connects job seekers and other populations with barriers to employment to numerous career and training resources to prepare them to enter or reenter the workforce of high-growth industry sectors. Although the service is targeted, its delivery is uniformly applied.

Leveraging an integrated workforce system, the GCWB also strives to create a seamless approach that attracts and retains in-demand employers. The agency understands that an employer may not care which funding source or program is covering the service it is receiving. By creating a specific Business Service Unit (BSU), the workforce system rallies a group of dedicated individuals to meet employer needs and present employers with services in ways that are beneficial and easy to understand. The BSU is our frontline business advocate, having strong ties to the local business communities. Because our Board is composed of many local business leaders, the GCWB taps a continuous flow of current and relevant information from employers. Board members are able to shape local policies and procedures to best fit the local marketplace.

The GCWB will work with our partners carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs in the region to continue to support the strategy identified in the State Plan. The Gulf Coast region is rich in potential partners for workforce. We have ten community colleges systems, more than a dozen university campuses, numerous economic development and business organizations, a host of state and local agencies, and a wide variety of community and faith-based organizations. Together, these institutions represent a rich infrastructure for the Gulf Coast workforce system.

With our partners, we provide a wide range of service to employer and individual customers. On the resident side, community and faith based organizations provide mentoring, life skills training, adult basic education, English as a second language, child care, transportation, and other work support service. Some of these organizations are paid vendors for our system while many others work informally with Workforce Solutions jointly assisting customers.

Workforce Solutions has an excellent relationship with our community college partners. The colleges provide educational programs leading to degrees and technical certificates, adult education and English as second language instruction, and other training. They work with the Board in developing customized training for employers, and consult with us in developing proposals related to workforce training. The colleges in the area are valuable partners in developing industry-based initiatives to address workforce issues in the region.

The region's major universities have a role in the workforce system, and are likely to have a greater one in the future as the Board's industry-based work continues and expands.

The region's 76 school districts are key partners in addressing many of the long-term shortages of skilled workers in our region. The Board has an existing relationship with many school districts, many career offices work directly with middle and high schools in their communities. The career offices are charged with providing service to young people in their schools.

In addition to serving individual youth, many of whom are out of school, the Board continues to work with schools broadly to provide good labor market information to schools, parents and young people. We continue to expand and improve our labor market information and career planning products which include the High Skill, High Growth Guide, Focus on Industry and Occupation profiles, and When I Grow Up. Our goal is to support schools in their efforts to reduce drop-out rates, target resources to prepare youth for the good jobs of the future, and provide both parents and students information they can use in selecting course work and career opportunities. The Board's Education Committee provides guidance and oversight, and is fully committed to assisting schools in producing more graduates with the skills employers want.

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## 2. A description of how the Board will work with entities carrying out core programs to:

- a. expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment;
- b. facilitate the development of career pathways and coenrollment, as appropriate, in core programs; and
- c. improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable).

## Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Eligibility

### WIOA Adult

First Priority includes customers who qualify as low-income<sup>1</sup> or basic skills deficient<sup>2</sup> with preference to customers who are a qualified veteran<sup>4</sup> or qualified spouse<sup>5</sup>.

Second Priority - Customer must be at or below self-sufficiency<sup>3</sup> income levels with preference to customers who are a qualified veteran<sup>4</sup> or qualified spouse<sup>5</sup>.

We established a Registry of customers who applied for financial assistance with work support, work experience, or training services and who were determined eligible for WIOA Adult funds and suitable for the assistance requested. We first fund customers from the Registry who meet the priority criteria described above (low-income). When there are no low-income customers on the Registry, we allow financial aid for customers on the Registry who are not low-income but are at or below the self-sufficiency income level as funds are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Exception: We project Workforce Solutions is able to provide short-term financial assistance to anyone requesting the assistance who qualifies. There is not a priority process for customers requesting short-term financial assistance.

## WIOA Dislocated Worker

Priority includes customers who are a qualified veteran or qualified spouse

We fund all customers determined eligible for WIOA Dislocated Worker funds with a preference given to customers who are qualified veterans or qualified spouses.

Exception: We project Workforce Solutions is able to provide short-term financial assistance to anyone requesting the assistance who qualifies. There is not a priority process for customers requesting short-term financial assistance.

### <sup>1</sup> Low-Income

An individual who meets any one of the following criteria satisfies the low-income requirement for WIOA adult services.

- Receives, or in the past six months has received, or is a member of a family that is receiving or in the past six months has received, assistance through SNAP, TANF, or the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program, or state or local income-based public assistance;
- Receives an income or is a member of a family receiving an income that, in relation to family size, is not in excess of the current Workforce Solutions Income Guidelines for Adults;
- Is a homeless individual as defined in §41403(6) of the Violence Against Women Act of 1994, or a homeless child or youth as defined in §725(2) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act;
- Receives or is eligible to receive a free or reduced-price lunch under the National School Lunch Act (this only applies to the individual receiving the free or reduced-price lunch);
- Is a foster youth, as defined in Texas Family Code §264.101(a-1) and §264.101(d), on behalf of whom state or local government payments are made; or
- Is an individual with a disability whose own income meets:
  - » Workforce Solutions Income Guidelines for Adults, even if the individual's family income does not meet the income requirements; or
  - » income eligibility criteria for payments under any federal, state, or local public assistance program.

## **<sup>2</sup> Basic Skills Deficient**

An individual who is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society satisfies the basic skills deficient requirement for WIOA adult services.

## **<sup>3</sup> Self-Sufficiency**

Workforce Solutions defines self-sufficiency at 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Self-sufficiency for a family of four is about \$48,500.

## **<sup>4</sup> Eligible Veteran**

A person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable as specified at 38 U.S.C. 101(2). Active services include full-time duty in the National Guard or a Reserve component, other than full-time for training purposes.

## **<sup>5</sup> Qualified Spouse**

The spouse of:

- (1) any veteran who died of a service-connected disability or any member of the armed forces who died while serving on active military, naval, or air service.
- (2) any member of the Armed Forces serving on active duty who, at the time of application for the priority, is listed in one or more of the following categories and has been so listed for a total of more than 90 days:
  - (i) missing in action;
  - (ii) captured in line of duty by a hostile force; or
  - (iii) forcibly detained or interned in line of duty by a foreign government or power;
- (3) any veteran who has a total disability resulting from a service-connected disability, as evaluated by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs;
- (4) any veteran who died while a disability, as indicated in paragraph (3) of this section, was in existence.

Note: the spouse of a living veteran or service member (definitions 2 or 3 above) will lose his or her eligibility if the veteran or service member loses the status that is the basis for eligibility. For example, the spouse of a veteran with a total service-connected disability will not be eligible if the veteran's disability is revised to a lower level. Similarly, a spouse whose eligibility is derived from a living veteran or service member will lose his or her eligibility upon divorce from the veteran or service member.

## Coenrollment and Pathways to Postsecondary Credentials

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board is one of three boards in the state to serve as the grant recipient and administrator of the Adult Education and Literacy grant. Since being awarded the grant, the Board has worked to ensure that adult education and literacy services are wholly integrated into the other core services provided through the workforce system. Moving forward, the Board remains committed to working closely with employers, Adult Education providers, and community partners to develop robust, customized training curriculum and courses that are aligned with high-demand industries and occupations, meet the specific needs of employers, and lead to nationally- and/or industry-recognized credentials.

The Board is also committed to connecting customers to wrap-around support services and resources, provided either directly through the workforce system or through strategic partnerships with community-based organizations, to eliminate as many barriers as possible that may keep customers from successfully completing their course and transitioning into employment and/or postsecondary education.

### 3. A description of the strategies for coordinating programs and services for target populations.

## Targeted Service Populations

### Employers

Texas' strong economic foundation is largely a credit to the diversity and stability of its private-sector businesses. The Gulf Coast Region boasts an estimated 125,000 total employers representing hundreds of public and private industries. The overwhelming majority of Gulf Coast employers are small businesses employing 100 or fewer workers. However, the largest percentages of private-sector jobs are with those companies that employ more than 100 workers. It is vital that the GCWB and its workforce partners collaborate with local economic development entities to equip Texas employers, both large and small, with a highly skilled workforce that will keep jobs in Texas and keep companies competitive in the global marketplace.

The GCWB provides more personalized services. Our recruiters who try to fill job postings offer a higher

level of service. We screen applicants and refer them specifically to employer. Although initial result may be fewer employers receiving a service the overall level of employer satisfaction should increase and the number of employers returning to receive our services should improve over time.

Our Employer Service unit will focus on Market Penetration in five industries: 5413 - Architectural, Engineering, and Related Services, 5415 - Computer Systems Design & Related Services, 5416 - Management, Scientific, & Technical Consulting, 6211 – Offices of Physicians, and 2382 – Building Equipment Contractors. We plan to personally contact 2,200 of these employers with 49 or fewer employees and provide services for 1,200 of them. We plan to personally contact 310 of these employers with 50 to 99 employees and provide services for 175 of them.

## **Communities**

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board is comprised of a cross section of local officials and businesspeople that form partnerships with local entities to deliver integrated services that address each community's unique needs. This workforce system now supports the delivery of Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) services within local communities to assist those individuals who need education and training in order to obtain the basic skills that will enable them to obtain sustainable employment and become self-sufficient.

## **Job Seekers**

Providing employment services and developing innovative strategies to help individuals find employment opportunities in high-growth, high-wage industries are central to the Board's mission. Workforce Solutions and its workforce partners offer services that lead to thousands of job seekers entering employment each year. Services include job-search assistance, labor market and career planning information, training and education opportunities, and unemployment benefits to those who lose their jobs through no fault of their own.

## **Workers**

Workforce Solutions seeks to help customers achieve and succeed in a quality work environment. Workforce Solutions provides workforce development and training, apprenticeship programs, and employment support services for members of its labor force. The agency promotes long-term self-sufficiency by enabling parents to work or attend education and training to launch a career pathway, while their children receive quality child care.

## **Unemployment Insurance Claimants**

UI claimants and employers are priority customers at our Workforce Solutions Offices. Staff must promptly

assist claimants and employers wishing to use Workforce Solutions Office resources to transmit materials to TWC for claims and appeals adjudication purposes. Customers are given access to space and telecommunications equipment necessary to participate in UI hearings. Additionally, staff supports customers with dedicated resources – computers, telephones, and printed materials about claim filing and UI rights and responsibilities.

## **Veterans**

Veterans are a priority population for the Gulf Coast Workforce Board. The Gulf Coast Workforce Board promotes the hiring of veterans by others through a number of initiatives, including services and programs for U.S. armed service members returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board has begun integrating staff of the Texas Veterans Commission into the Workforce Solutions career offices. This allows veterans efficient and seamless access to employment services, one-on-one job coaching as well as resource and referral services.

To support the efforts of TVC staff, we have placed large, stand-up posters in the front of our offices that ask customers to tell us if they are a veteran and promote the additional resources offered to vets. In addition, we have a special section on our website about veteran services – Our service begins when your service ends – found at <http://wrksolutions.com/jobs/veteranservices.html>. The site includes links to and information about re-employment rights, veterans' benefits for school, buying a home, health care and counseling.

In addition, the GWFB continues to support TWC's Initiative Hiring Red, White & You! which connects Texas veterans and their families with Texas employers who value the experience, discipline and other exceptional qualities inherent with a military background.

There are thousands of veterans in Texas who are eligible for work. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that the national unemployment rate for all veterans is 6.3 percent. In contrast, for those veterans who served in the military post 9/11, the unemployment rate is 10.0 percent.

The GWB's most recent Hiring, Red, White and You! job fair, held on November 10, 2016 connected over 4,000 customers to 152 employers and 21 veterans service and training organizations.

## **Individuals with Disabilities**

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board upholds the highest standard of equal opportunity and access to service for all its customers. To meet the needs of employers, Workforce Solutions provides opportunity for

everyone to be actively involved in the potential labor pool by ensuring staff focus on abilities, not disabilities.

### **Foster Youth**

Another priority population for Workforce Solutions is foster youth. We provide access to education, employment training and services, life skills classes, and appropriate support services to customers identified as foster youth.

### **Students and Their Parents**

Providing today's youth with education, training, and workplace opportunities is essential to the state's future growth and success. In an effort to ensure that young people have the skills to meet future workforce needs, Texas must support programs that steer students toward in-demand careers from an early age. TWC supports programs that identify educational and career paths for students and their parents, including vocational and technical training, as well as those that require two-year, four-year, and higher education levels.

Educational materials and online tools that help parents, educators, and students identify career pathways are developed and distributed by Workforce Solutions. In addition to serving individual youth, many of whom are out of school, the Board continues to work with schools broadly to provide good labor market information to schools, parents and young people. We continue to expand and improve our labor market information and career planning products which include the High Skill, High Growth Guide, Focus on Industry and Occupation profiles, and When I Grow Up. Our goal is to support schools in their efforts to reduce drop-out rates, target resources to prepare youth for the good jobs of the future, and provide both parents and students information they can use in selecting course work and career opportunities. The Board's Education Committee provides guidance and oversight, and is fully committed to assisting schools in producing more graduates with the skills employers want.

Since its inception, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board has been committed to building a demand driven workforce system with employers as the primary but not exclusive customers of the system. Having designed the regional workforce delivery system from a labor market perspective, we recognize that chronic imbalances in labor markets are most effectively addressed when everyone, including special populations is part of the workforce.

#### 4. A description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local area:

- a. To facilitate engagement of employers in the workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.
- b. To support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area.
- c. To better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development
- d. To strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs

Note: This may include the implementation of initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, use of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of regional employers. These initiatives must support the strategy described above.

### Employer Engagement

The Workforce Board would like Workforce Solutions to be the first choice of employers when they need assistance with workforce issues. Most employers use our core products - help with recruiting and screening for job openings. We would like to provide a deeper level of service to our employer customers, becoming partners with them to solve workforce-related business problems. To this end, we have disbanded our in-house outreach unit and transitioned these staff to be in the field making face to face contact with employers. It is our belief we will provide a better quality service to our employer customers and employer customers will have a higher level of satisfaction with our services.

The Board is continuing to take steps to improve the quality of our screening and referral process for employers. We plan to continue these efforts by improving our system's ability to obtain and communicate accurate information on what employers need and want in employees. ESD staff review new job orders submitted electronically by employers, and edit them to provide better matches with job candidates.

Employment Counselors help individuals get jobs that best fit their skills, interests, and experience. We employ staffing specialists who “work” the job orders, looking for candidates in our system and outside. We continue to develop this function to include contacting college and university placement offices, community-based organizations, and other sources to find the best workers for the jobs we are trying to fill.

The Board will continue to track the results of its efforts to improve employer satisfaction through an annual survey. The current survey measures how well employers believe our business consultants follow through on promises, understand their needs, are responsive to those needs, offer solutions to problems, and are professional.

### **Meeting the Needs of Local Businesses**

The Board's Employer Services Division provides service to employers. We believe that helping employers find skilled workers results in the region's economic development and benefits individual workers. We will help more than 26,000 Gulf Coast employers identify qualified candidates for job openings. Business Service Representatives visit employers to offer services and learn firsthand a business's specific need. They offer the full system resources to help businesses by:

- Recruiting, screening, referring and testing applicants for jobs
- Providing information about state and federal labor laws
- Providing economic and labor market information including occupation-specific wage and salary data
- Outplacement services for employees who have been laid off due to a plant closure, downsizing or a reduction-in-force
- Subsidizing a portion of a qualified employee's wage for a short time while the employer provides on the job training.

Employers can use the Workforce Solutions website to list jobs with WorkInTexas.com, find labor market information, and access information about employment laws.

The Board's Employer Service Division provides staff to committees with members from the same industry willing to work together to address the industry's immediate and long-term workforce needs.

- These industry committees help the Workforce Board by adding real time advice to statistical data about the workforce needs of companies in the industry.
- These committee recommendations allow the Board to direct our resources to train people for the jobs in demand now and later

Employer Service Division staff also work with the committees to identify outside resources to meet the needs identified by the industry committee.

## Economic Development

The Board’s philosophy is that workforce development is a component of economic development, and all of our activities reflect this philosophy. We measure our ability to help create jobs and help employer customers become more competitive. Our work with economic development organizations includes partnering on industry-based work groups, sharing planning and evaluation information, coordinating grant proposals, and assisting in bringing new businesses to the region and retraining and supporting existing businesses.

The Board works closely with economic development partners to identify long-range issues such as the changing demographics of the region’s workforce and a trend to lower educational achievement; and shorter-range issues such as funding transportation solutions in Colorado County so employers can get the workers they need. Below is a list of economic development organizations that our Employer Services Division currently maintains membership status. However, we work collaboratively with many additional economic development organizations, not on this list.

Central Fort Bend Chamber Alliance	Sealy Chamber of Commerce
Brazosport Area Chamber of Commerce	Greater Houston Women's Chamber of Commerce
Asian Chamber of Commerce	Houston Northwest Chamber of Commerce
Galveston Chamber of Commerce	Greater Houston Black Chamber of Commerce
The Woodlands Area Chamber of Commerce	Clear Lake Area Chamber of Commerce
Baytown Chamber of Commerce	Greater Conroe/Lake Conroe Area Chamber of Commerce
Greater Houston Partnership	Houston East End Chamber of Commerce
Katy Area Chamber of Commerce	Economic Development Alliance for Brazoria County
Bay City Chamber of Commerce	Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership
Houston Intercontinental Chamber of Commerce	Pearland Economic Development Corporation
Wharton Chamber of Commerce	Greater Tomball Area Chamber of Commerce
Palacios Chamber of Commerce	The Woodlands Area Economic Development Council
Pearland Chamber of Commerce	Columbus Chamber of Commerce
Economic Alliance Houston Port Region	Galveston County

## Unemployment in the Region

While the price of oil plunged below \$30 per barrel, our region's workforce has certainly felt the effects. Thousands of highly-trained individuals have been laid off and are struggling to find employment as more and more companies announce workforce reductions.

Gulf Coast Workforce Solutions announced the launch of the Gulf Coast Oil & Gas Initiative aimed specifically at those individuals. The goal of the program is to find employers in other industries that are looking for highly-trained individuals to meet their needs and match them with job-seekers from the state's database, WorkInTexas.com.

The Gulf Coast Oil & Gas Initiative will assist 500 jobseekers displaced from the oil and gas industry through a virtual office. The services offered include resume critique, transitional occupation analysis, tools and seminars designed to help with their search, as well as specialized training and OJT opportunities.

Workforce Solutions will find employers in other industries that are looking for highly-trained individuals to meet their needs and match them with job-seekers from the state's database, WorkinTexas.com. In addition to having access to the largest database of job seekers, this initiative will also assist companies with recruitment, pre-screening applicants, hiring events and specialized training. The team provides matches to those businesses with the appropriate Oil and Gas customers based on their previous experience. They also work with WIT and attend job fairs.

As the Oil and Gas Initiative continues to expand its connection to displaced oil and gas workers and introduce Workforce Solutions services to them, we see two areas that need attention for the unit to increase its success helping workers transition to new industries;

- Employer outreach and education about the talent available to them from the displaced oil and gas worker pools
- Add recruiting services specializing in transitioning displaced oil and gas workers to new industries, similar to what we did at the Aerospace Transition Unit and the Sealy Transition Center

- 5. An explanation of how the Board will coordinate local workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities that are carried out in the local area and how the Board will promote entrepreneurial-skills training and microenterprise services.**

## **Workforce Investment**

A fundamental strategy of the Board is to support the region's key industries by making significant investments to targeted industries. The Board employs full time staff as Education, Construction/Crafts and Advanced Manufacturing /Supply Logistics Industry Liaisons. Their goal is to partner with specific employers in high growth, high skill Gulf Coast industry sectors. The Liaisons work to meet employers' current and future workforce needs by coordinating regional agency services, training and education to fulfill skill needs. Industry Liaisons work to support changes in structures and policies to more closely align and integrate workforce, education and economic development programs to better serve Gulf Coast employers. They provide Board representation and expertise to economic development and industry-led workforce initiatives.

Where appropriate, the Board supports customers who are interested in becoming entrepreneurs and/or creating micro businesses through referrals to entities that have better expertise in that area. Small business development centers, for example, are a rich source of training, and the Board supports several successful grant proposals for funds such as the U.S. Health and Human Services' Job Opportunities for Low Income (JOLI) program.

- 6. A description of the one-stop delivery system in the local area, including explanations of the following:**
  - a. How the Board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers and how providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and job seekers;
  - b. How the Board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including to remote areas, through the use of technology and other means;
  - c. How entities within the one-stop delivery system, including the one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA §188, if applicable, and with applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals who have disabilities; and
  - d. The roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners.

## One-Stop Delivery System Description

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board and its operating affiliate Workforce Solutions are the public workforce system in the 13-county Houston-Galveston region. We help employers meet their human resource needs and individuals build careers, so both can compete in the global economy.

- The Workforce Board is business-led and community focused, with members representing private sector business, education, organized labor, and community-based organizations.
- With participation from the region's chief local elected officials, the Workforce Board sets the strategic direction for the regional workforce system and guides the area's workforce agenda focusing on four key results:
  - » competitive employers,
  - » an educated workforce,
  - » more and better jobs, and
  - » higher incomes.
- The Board contracts for the operations of its affiliate Workforce Solutions, which directly delivers service to employers and individuals.

### What we do:

- Our results for 2018 are as follows:
  - Served 29,378 employers and 406,277 individuals
  - 12,868 of our employers returned for service
  - Assisted in creating 3,079 new jobs
  - Spend \$12.9 million on scholarships for more than 4,158 individuals in high skill, high growth occupational training.
  - Supported about 21,000 families and 40,000 children with early education
  - Helped about 219,000 individuals go to work
  - Raised the incomes of 82,000 by at least 20%
  - Helped 76.3% of individuals pursuing a post-secondary education attain a credential (certificate or degree).

- Our entire system worked to provide individuals, students, parents, teachers and counselors with up-to-date and useful information on the good jobs of the future – focusing on the high-skill, high-growth jobs that provide opportunities for growth and good wages.

### **Meeting the needs of local employers, workers, and job seekers:**

Two key performance metrics are employer market share and employer customer loyalty which measures are intended on gauging our success at increasing employer use and satisfaction with our service. The Board sets annual and long-range targets, regularly reviews performance, and adjusts operating strategies as needed. The Board offers these metrics and performance as evidence of the effectiveness of strategies it has implemented to improve services to employers.

**Employer Loyalty** – Last year’s performance indicated 61.5% of our customers value our services and returned for additional services. Our current annual target is 60%.

Two key performance metrics are customers employed after exiting from services and higher earnings gains.

**Customers Employed** – This year’s performance indicated 76.6% of our customers were employed in the quarter after exiting from services. Our current annual target is 76%.

**Higher Real Incomes** – This year’s performance indicated 31.5% of customers who exited had earnings gains of at least 20%. Our current annual target is 37%.

### **Facilitating Services**

Over the last few years, the Board’s revenue continues to shrink and we have to do more with less. The good news is that we are meeting this challenge, in part, by leveraging available technology and developing cost efficient outreach strategies.

Blogforce (<http://blogforce.wrksolutions.com/>) provides customers with timely, helpful, and usually humorous, advice on getting and keeping jobs, and career planning. Bloggers are Workforce Solutions office and Board staff.

In addition to the 26 full-time career offices managed by the Board in the Region, there are 11 additional itinerant sites. Information on those sites is available at this link: <http://www.wrksolutions.com/find-a-location?location=Part-Time> - These sites provide basic job search services to those customers unable to reach a full services career office, as well as allows them to make appointments with office staff members who maintain a part time presence at the sites.

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board has a Regional Team made up of Navigators and Facilitators that go out in to the community to reach populations that might not be served in a local career office. The Regional Team works with our partners to conduct community-based job search seminars and workshops. These presentations are conducted outside the career office in schools, libraries, and a wide range of community based organizations.

Our adult education customers are able to access adult education sites and classes located throughout the region, often near a customer's residence or place of employment. Many providers offer distance learning options for customers who experience transportation issues or merely prefer the convenience of taking classes remotely. A few of our offices have adult education sites in the career office.

## **Equal Opportunity and Access to Service**

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board upholds the highest standard of equal opportunity and access to service for all its customers. To meet the needs of employers, Workforce Solutions provides opportunity for everyone to be actively involved in the potential labor pool by ensuring staff focus on abilities, not disabilities.

To make certain staff are focused on customer abilities, all career office staff participate in professional development trainings which include:

- Courses through the National Workforce Institute where staff learn to provide customer service from a strength-based approach; identifying customers' skills and abilities and then matching them to available jobs.
- Diversity Awareness training from Texas Workforce Solutions Vocational Rehabilitation Services.
- Computer based trainings from Texas Workforce Commission on Diversity, EEO, and Discrimination Prevention as well as the Discrimination Complaint Process.
- An overview of Equal Opportunity Standards and Guidelines including providing accommodations and the discrimination complaint process.
- Usage of assistive technology in the career offices.
- Various disability awareness topics.

To further ensure equal opportunity and access to service for all its customers, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board has a team of three system-wide Navigators whose primary role is to ensure that customers with disabilities are able to “navigate” the realm of finding employment on a level playing field with those who do not have disabilities. To do this the Navigators:

- Provide staff training on various disability related topics including the use of auxiliary aids and assistive technologies.
- Work along side career office staff to ensure needs of individuals with disabilities are being met.
- Coordinate with Texas Workforce Solutions Vocational Rehabilitation Services and other community organizations to promote awareness of disability related topics, attend disability related events, and assist individuals with reaching their employment goals.
- Host employer education events to provide information on hiring and providing accommodations for job seekers with disabilities.
- Recruit and prepare individuals with disabilities for special hiring initiatives.

Physical accessibility of each career office location is assessed by the EO Officer on an annual basis. In addition to being physically accessible, each career office has at least one of each of the following assistive technologies and auxiliary aids:

- Accessible work station equipped with assistive technologies such as JAWS, MAGic, headphones or speakers, large print keyboard, and trackball mouse;
- TTY phone;
- Video Relay Service (VRS) phone;
- Hearing Aid Compatible phone with volume control;
- Pocket Talker voice amplifier;
- Adjustable height table and chair; and
- Professional interpreter services from a qualified source.

In general, Workforce Solutions Career Office staff, Employer Service staff, the Navigator Team, and EO Officer work together to provide employers with information about the Work Opportunity Tax Credit, the American with Disabilities Act, and providing accommodations to encourage employers to give serious consideration to hiring qualified candidates with disabilities.

## 7. A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area.

### Adult and Dislocated Worker Activities

We offer professional advice and individually-tailored service to assist our customers in entering the workforce, going back to work, continuing to work, or advancing in a career. Eligible adult and dislocated workers may receive two levels of service:

Career services are available to any customer who wants or needs these services. They may be provided electronically or by staff. Career services are designed to help customers get a job, keep a job, or get a better job. Career Services include the following:

- Job openings/listings
- Placement services
- Employment counseling and career planning
- Outreach, intake (including worker profiling), and orientation to information and other services available through Workforce Solutions;
- Assessment of skills levels, including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps), and support service needs;
- Support services
- Computer access
  - » Internet job search
  - » Computerized job search software tutorials
  - » E-mail
  - » Resume preparation
- Job search assistance (referral to job openings, FAX, Telephone)
- Labor Market Information
- Information on support services for working families including information on available and affordable child care
- Job Search Seminars
  - » Resume tips

- » Interviewing tips
- » Networking
- » Landing that First Job
- » Rebranding Your Skills
- Financial literacy
- Internships and work experience opportunities
- Follow-up services

Training services are available to support individuals' education, training or re-training in high-skill, high-growth occupations. Training services includes:

- Financial Aid – scholarships for education and occupational skills training for individuals deemed in need of training in order to become employed or retain employment and for education and work support such as child care, transportation, and work-related expenses when needed by the individual to work or participate in education or training.
- Career advancement training
- Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) activities including activities of English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs, in combination with training
- On-the-job training (OJT), including registered apprenticeships
- Customized training

**8. A description of how the Board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities described in WIOA §134(a)(2)(A).**

### **Rapid Response Activities**

Our Rapid Response team works with employers that are faced with workforce challenges that include reducing their workforce. Once layoffs are announced the Rapid Response team begins working with the employer to bring outplacement services onsite and provide them with immediate response to the needs of each employee. These services include information on where and how to look for work, training and filing unemployment insurance claims. We provide the workers with tools like labor market information, job listings, career exploration and planning. Additionally, we provide information on how to get registered for

work in Texas and work with them until they are employed.

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- 9. A description and assessment of the type and availability of workforce investment activities for youth in the local area, including activities for youth who have disabilities. This description must include an identification of successful models of such activities.**

## **Youth Workforce Investment Activities**

The Board provides year-round employment and training services for economically disadvantaged youth (ages 14-21). Eligible customers receive an objective assessment, including a review of academic and occupational skill levels and service needs; an individual service strategy with an age-appropriate career goal with steps to help the customer stay in school, return to school or go to work. Individuals may receive referrals to education and training to prepare them for postsecondary educational opportunities and/or to prepare them for jobs. The Board also provides schools with informational guides to show linkages between academic and occupational learning.

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board has a Regional Team made up of Navigators and Facilitators that go out in to the community to reach populations that might not be served in a local career office. One population they reach is young adults with disabilities.

Each year this team partners with multiple school districts to conduct Employability Skills sessions that help hundreds of young adults with disabilities prepare for an annual Transition Fair that takes place in the Houston area each Spring.

The Navigators and career offices work with Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors with Texas Workforce Solutions Vocational Rehabilitation Services to help connect young adults with disabilities with services offered through the local career office. Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors also arrange to meet with young adults in the local career offices.

The Board is currently involved in several projects that support the education industry as well as workforce invest for youth in the local area including those listed below:

## **Professional Academy for Career Exploration**

The Professional Academy is an innovative year-round work experience and college and career readiness program. For the 2016 school year Workforce Solutions has partnered with the City of Houston and Worthing High School to provide seniors at Worthing High School enrolled in a “Career Prep Co-op” class, rotating paid internships at the City of Houston in the professional fields of Public Administration, Finance, IT, and Healthcare. Over the course of the 2016-2017 school year and the following summer, these students are participating in year-round activities including skills training, work experience, on the job training, job shadowing and mentoring, career readiness and exploration, financial literacy training, and post-secondary preparation. Currently we have 12 students enrolled in the program.

## **Young Aspiring Professionals**

The Young Aspiring Professional Project (YAP) models the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act’s job-driven priorities for out-of-school youth through a sustainable, multi-dimensional worksite-based platform – designed to reengage at least 100 disconnected youth with both education and workforce opportunities that lead to improved income and employability. We work with an eligible population of out-of-school youth, between the ages of 18 and 29, who reside in the Settegast and Denver Harbor neighborhoods or who come from Houston ISD’s Wheatley, Scarborough, and Kashmere High Schools feeder patterns. Priority is given to homeless, truant, court-involved, transient and foster youth. Relying on an aggressive community-based outreach and ongoing engagement system, individuals are recruited in cohorts from a number of organizations that provide mentorship and social assistance. The project combines work-based learning, career pathways education, and existing sector initiatives to achieve its anticipated results. Targeted industries for this project include manufacturing, construction, and logistics with the special emphasis on occupations with clearly defined career pathways that include multiple skill certifications and tiered advancement opportunities.

## **J.P. Morgan Chase College and Career Institutes 2015 and 2016**

Project GRAD’s College and Career Institutes, with the funding and support of JP Morgan Chase, Workforce Solutions, and local community colleges, provided rising juniors and seniors with the opportunity to explore what college is like and what training and education is necessary for various careers.

In 2016 more than 40 volunteers from small, medium and large businesses in the region participated in the CCI project. Nine institutes were held at Lone Star College (North Harris, Cy Fair, and University Park), Houston Community College (Southeast, Stafford, Northeast and Coleman), San Jacinto College (South and Central), and Lee College (Liberty) serving 800 students entering grades 9-12 from 18 school districts and 6 charter or private schools.

Each student received at least 4 hours of college preparation instruction from Project GRAD and 8 hours of Workforce Preparation and Labor Market instruction from Workforce Solutions including identification of skills, interests, and values, job search skills such as interviewing, resume writing, networking, and application completion, and the utilization of current and relevant LMI in college and career decision making and life planning. Students were given at least 8 hours of instruction in at least 3 of the following industry/occupation tracks:

Robotics	Machining	Pipefitting
Welding	Drilling Simulation	Maritime Logistics
3D Modeling	HVAC Technology	Fluid Mechanics
Lean Manufacturing	Logistics and Supply Chain	Manufacturing Technology
AutoCAD	Design Engineering	Construction Technology
Petroleum Field Services	Electrical Technology	

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**10. A description of how the Board will coordinate relevant secondary- and postsecondary-education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.**

### **Education Services**

The Board continues to build a robust network of approved vendors and educational programs. We have developed clear policies and procedures for Workforce Solutions staff to use when awarding scholarships to help customers pay for school that prepares them for a career in an occupation we support through scholarships. Through this vendor network, we can award scholarships to customers, who might not otherwise be able to go to school, prepare them for meaningful careers in occupations that are in high-demand in the region’s key industries.

The Board will work with adult education and literacy providers, particularly Institutions of Higher

Education (IHE), to develop strategies that will leverage financial aid from the workforce system and the IHE and that will support customers through completion of their initial course and provide a seamless transition into postsecondary education. These strategies will involve sources such as the Federal Pell Grant, Ability to Benefit, and workforce training funds.

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**11. A description of how the Board will provide transportation, including public transportation, and other appropriate support services in the local area in coordination with WIOA Title I workforce investment activities.**

### **Transportation and Additional Support Services**

Workforce Solutions offer support service when we believe it will help a customer go to work quickly, to keep an existing job, or to advance in a career. Types of support service we provide includes:

- **Work Support** – assistance to help customers accept a job offer or keep a job.
- **Work Search Support** – assistance to help customers look for work.
- **Education Support** – assistance to help customers obtain education or training to meet the expectations of employers in our region.

Categories of assistance includes:

- Transportation
  - » Personal Expenses
- Gas, bus fare/passes, other
  - » Vehicular Expenses
- Car repair/maintenance, Consumables, Vehicle safety inspection
- Car insurance, Vehicle registration
  
- Health Care or Health-Related
  - » Immunizations
  - » Physical Exams

- » Vision/corrective lenses
- » Prescription safety glasses
- » Drug tests
  
- Clothing
  - » Work clothes, uniforms for work or training
  - » Interview clothes
  - » Shoes, boots, safety boots
  
- Tools and Equipment
  
- Licenses
  - » Application or renewal fees
  - » Testing
  - » Certification
  - » Immigration document renewal fees
  - » Background checks
  - » TWIC
  
- Documents
  - » Fees to obtain documents for job search, education or work requirements
- Birth Certificates
- School records
- Passports

**12. A description of plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act services and other services provided through the one-stop delivery system.**

## **Coordination with Wagner-Peyser Act Services**

### **Employment Service Professional Staff Development**

Wagner-Peyser–funded ES staff receives professional development training at new employee orientation and yearly continuing education classes and on an as needed basis, to ensure staff is prepared and able to provide high-quality services to both job seekers and employers. Performance is monitored closely; as needs arise, Gulf Coast may respond with staff development activities, such as classroom instruction, webinars and one-on-one training.

Gulf Coast participates in the “Texas Model” for the delivery of ES services, which restructured the oversight and responsibility for ES state merit staff. Under the Texas Model, Gulf Coast has full responsibility for day-to-day guidance of state ES staff. TWC still maintains administrative responsibility, but Workforce Solutions Office managers share responsibility for directing daily work assignments, assigning individual performance goals, coordinating hiring, initiating disciplinary action, and evaluating staff performance.

Placing responsibility for ES staff with Workforce Solutions Offices supports an integrated workforce system. Many of the services provided by ES and WIOA are similar; the Texas Model gives Boards and their contractors the opportunity and flexibility to design integrated services, regardless of the program from which they are funded. All direction and guidance given to ES employees must be consistent with the provisions of state and federal laws, rules, and regulations governing the administration and delivery of the ES program. TWC provides technical support and quality assurance to Boards and contracted service providers through local Integrated Service Area Managers (ISAMs). ISAMs serve as the TWC supervisors for Texas Model staff. ISAMs coordinate all Texas Model staff-related actions with Boards and their contractors.

ES staff receives mandatory professional development training at new employee orientation and biannually and annually, and on an as needed basis, to ensure staff is prepared to provide high quality services to both job seekers and employers. ES staff receives training on how to conduct a job search, customer service, and how to use WorkInTexas.com. Performance is monitored closely; as needs arise, Boards may respond with staff development activities, such as classroom instruction, webinars, and one-on-one training.

## **Meaningful Assistance in Filing for UI**

UI claimants and employers are priority customers at our Workforce Solutions Offices. Staff must promptly assist claimants and employers wishing to use Workforce Solutions Office resources to transmit materials to TWC for claims and appeals adjudication purposes. Customers are given access to space and telecommunications equipment necessary to participate in UI hearings. Additionally, staff supports customers with dedicated resources – computers, telephones, and printed materials about claim filing and UI rights and responsibilities.

## **Reemployment Assistance to UI Claimants**

Wagner-Peyser–funded ES staff located in the Workforce Solutions Offices serves all customers. However, UI claimants are a priority population and staff is charged with improving claimant reemployment by connecting claimants with an array of relevant services and programs.

Among them, the Rapid Reemployment Services (RRES) program, known nationally as the Worker Profiling and Reemployment Services program, is a DOLETA-approved statistical model that uses claimant characteristics, as well as Board-level economic indicators, to assess the likelihood of a claimant exhausting UI benefits. On a weekly basis, TWC provides Gulf Coast with the likely-to-exhaust score of every individual who has received a first payment of UI benefits. We then determine the UI claimants to outreach for services and the type of reemployment services to provide. At a minimum, claimants called in under the RRES program must receive an orientation and an employment plan.

## **Use of Wagner-Peyser Funds to Support UI Claimants**

Gulf Coast benefits from the joint-administration of the UI program and workforce services by TWC, which allows efficient coordination between programs. Computer linkages coordinate and provide services between WorkInTexas.com and the UI automation system. These links ensure that UI claimants who are required to register have done so, and that UI claimants comply with their work search requirements.

Gulf Coast strives to assist and place individuals in jobs before they reach long-term unemployment. Gulf Coast has a performance measure that tracks success in placing job seekers in employment within 10 weeks of their initial monetary eligibility. We achieve this measure by providing quality job posting and job development activities coupled with increased outreach to participants to ensure better applications and quality referrals.

Gulf Coast uses the RRES program to help claimants find new employment as quickly as possible. As mentioned above, all claimants who are outreached are required to attend an orientation and receive staff assistance in developing an individualized employment plan. Claimants are offered other staff-assisted

services, too, including job referrals and job development activities to help in the work search.

**13. A description of how the Board will coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities under WIOA Title II. This description must include how the Board will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II consistent with WIOA §§107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA §232.**

## Adult, Education, and Literacy Services

In September 2014 the Gulf Coast Workforce Board began administering the public adult education and literacy funds in our 13-county region. Through a consortium of eight contractors, we have helped more than 25,000 customers using about \$14 million.

Adult education and literacy providers offer English language, mathematics, reading, and writing instruction to help students acquire the skills needed to earn a high school equivalency, enter college or career training and/ or succeed in the workforce. While some classes may charge a small, nominal fee (less than \$20) most adult education and literacy services are free to adult learners. Service is also available to young people who have dropped out of high school and have not earned an equivalency diploma.

## Service Categories

Adult education and literacy providers typically offer a wide variety of adult education courses. Most of these courses are components of four major service categories:

- **High School Equivalency Preparation** – Academic preparation toward readiness for the high school equivalency examination.
- **Combined GED & Skills Training** – Traditional GED preparation offered with concurrent skills training. You may also hear this referred to as “contextualized learning”.
- **English as a Second Language** – ESL courses teach English literacy to individuals with languages other than English as their primary language.
- **EL/Civics** – Civics courses inform individuals on United States history, culture, and practice in preparation for U.S. citizenship. EL/Civics courses are frequently offered in conjunction with ESL courses.

## The Consortium

The consortium includes a managing partner, Region 6 Education Service Center, and fifteen providers. Region 6 offers programming support for the system. The fifteen providers offer direct service through their own facilities as well as through sites at hundreds of community based organizations, such as churches, libraries, non-profits, schools.

Name of Organization	Counties Served	Role	Responsibilities
Region 6 Education Service Center	All 13 Counties	Lead Organization	Provide technical and programmatic support
Alliance for Multicultural Community Services	Harris	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy
Association for the Advancement of Mexican Americans (AAMA)	Harris	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy
BakerRipley	Harris	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy
Brazosport College	Brazoria	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy
Boys and Girls Club of Walker County	Montgomery and Walker	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy
Chinese Community Center	Harris	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy
College of the Mainland	Chambers and Galveston	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy
Community Family Centers	Harris	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy
Harris County Department of Education	Harris and Liberty	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy
Houston Community College	Fort Bend and Harris	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy
Lone Star College	Harris and Montgomery	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy
San Jacinto College	Harris	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy
Wharton County Junior College	Austin, Colorado, Fort Bend, Waller, Wharton, and Matagorda	Service Provider	Adult education and literacy

## Referring Customers

At the present time, staff must refer a customer to an adult education provider; they cannot make an eligibility determination or place a customer in a class.

- Using the Workforce Solutions referral tool, available online at [www.wrksolutions.com/ael-services](http://www.wrksolutions.com/ael-services), Staff members select the county in which the customer wants to attend class and complete the Contact Us form. The appropriate adult education provider will contact the customer to arrange intake and placement.
- Customers may use the tool themselves, as may any partner organizations or the general public.

### Things to Know

1. There are multiple adult education sites and classes located throughout the region, often near a customer's residence or place of employment. Classes or sites sometimes change locations, so at this time, staff members refer the customer to the adult education provider for exact placement.
2. Many providers offer distance learning options for customers who experience transportation issues or merely prefer the convenience of taking classes remotely.
3. A few of our offices have adult education sites in the career office.
4. Employers interested in improving their employees' basic skills can host adult education classes on-site.

### Coming Soon

As the Board works to make better connections with adult education providers, we will:

- Expand and improve the referral tool to offer real-time and more detailed information for staff and customers on the location of individual classes
- Assist in helping staff from the offices, Employer Service, Financial Aid Payment Office, and Financial Aid Call Center connect with adult education staff.
- Work with the Bridging the Gaps workgroup to find better ways to integrate all service for customers

### Action

- Make sure managers, supervisors, and staff members are familiar with how to access the referral tool and make referrals for customers, as well as the basics about the consortium's adult education and literacy service
- Ensure that staff members first consider adult education options and providers from within our consortium prior to authorizing financial aid for other providers.

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**14. Provide copies of executed cooperative agreements that explain how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local one-stop delivery system. This includes cooperative agreements (as defined in WIOA §107(d)(11)) between the Board or other local entities described in §101(a)(11)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11)(B)) and the local office of a designated state agency or designated state unit that administers programs that are carried out under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 720 et seq.) (other than §112 or part C of that title (29 U.S.C. 732, 741) and are subject to §121(f) in accordance with §101(a)(11) of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. 721(a)(11)) with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals who have disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts.**

On September 1, 2016, Vocational Rehabilitation Services were transferred from DARS to TWC, in accordance with Senate Bill (SB) 208, 84th Texas Legislature, Regular Session (2015). The Gulf Coast Workforce Board is working with TWC to insure a smooth transition and integrate TWC's Vocational Rehabilitation Services into current Workforce Solutions' offices. Currently, cooperative agreements have not been established between the Vocational Rehabilitation program and the local workforce investment boards. The Gulf Coast Workforce Board will await further instruction from TWC in regards to these cooperative agreements.

**15. An identification of the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA §107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III), as determined by the CEOs or the governor under WIOA §107(d)(12)(B)(i).**

## **Houston-Galveston Area Council**

The Houston-Galveston Area Council is the staff for the Gulf Coast Workforce Board and the entity authorized by the Workforce Board and the chief elected officials to act as the grant recipient in the Gulf Coast Workforce Development Area.

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**16. A description of the competitive process that will be used to award the sub-grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities.**

The Houston Galveston Area Council (H-GAC) serves as the grant recipient and administrative entity for the regional public workforce system. In this role, H-GAC receives public workforce funds, contracts with various organizations and oversees the workforce system's operation and performance.

In 2013, H-GAC solicited contracts for the regional workforce system. This is the fourth and final year of the procurement cycle for regional workforce contracts. H-GAC will release a Request for Proposal to solicit contracts for its regional workforce system including adult education in 2017.

When H-GAC issues a Request for Proposal, it will be posted for prospective bidders to view.

All proposal packages will be available for download from this site:

<http://www.wrksolutions.com/about-us/business-opportunities/rfps/current-rfps>

After the deadline for proposal submission has closed, all proposals will be evaluated using the criteria specified in the RFP and an evaluation matrix will be developed to score the individual proposals by each member of the evaluation team.

Members of the Gulf Coast Workforce Board's Procurement Committee will meet in a public forum to review and discuss results of the evaluation. Each bidder will have an opportunity to make a brief oral presentation to the Procurement Committee. Committee members will have the opportunity to ask questions of the bidders.

After all proposals are scored and selected proposers are interviewed, the Procurement Committee will make their recommendations to the Gulf Coast Workforce Board. The Board will then vote on the Procurement Committee's recommendation. When the Board reaches their decision, they will submit their recommendation to the Budget and Finance Committee of the H-GAC Board of Directors for approval to negotiate, and execute, a contract with the ranked proposers in descending order. However, the Final approval and selection of award lies with the Board of Directors. H-GAC reserves the right to delay that date as needed and to reject any and all proposals as deemed in its interest.

**17. A description of the local levels of performance negotiated with TWC and the CEOs consistent with WIOA §116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the Board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA Title I subtitle B, and the one-stop delivery system in the local area.**

## **Performance Targets**

The Board adopted 13 measures and set performance targets for 2018:

<b>More Competitive Employers</b>	Market Share - (Oct. 2017 - Sept. 2018)	23,000
	Customer Loyalty - (Oct. 2017 - Sept. 2018)	60%
<b>Higher Incomes</b>	Exiters with Earnings Gains of at least 20%	37%
	Exiters employed in the 1st Qtr After Exit with Earnings Gains	76%
<b>More and Better Jobs</b>	New jobs created as a direct result of partnering with other business organizations	3,300
	New jobs created with employers in industries targeted by the Gulf Coast Workforce Board as a direct result of partnerships	75%
	New jobs created in high-skill occupations targeted by the Gulf Coast Workforce Board as a direct result of partnerships	45%
	Customers employed in the 1st Qtr After Exit	76%
	Customers, unemployed at entrance, employed in the 1st Qtr After Exit	74%
	Number of customers employed in 2nd and 3rd quarters after exit	83%
	Customers employed in the entrance quarter	65%
<b>A Better Educated Workforce</b>	Customers pursuing Education Credential that achieve one by quarter after exit	74%
	Customers enrolled in post-secondary who earn certificate or degree by quarter after exit	85%

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## 18. A description of the actions the Board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing Board.

### Remaining a High Performing Board

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board has long understood that to be an effective and high-performing Board, certain actions and responsibilities must be undertaken.

The Board's specific responsibilities (those things for which it alone is responsible) include:

- Developing itself as a well-educated, highly diversified, high-performing board
- Establishing ongoing relationships between the workforce system and its owners
- Developing governing policies to guide itself as a board and the regional workforce system (i.e., long-term results statements)

- Developing an effective working relationship with its chief executive officer
- Ensuring board staff/system performance
- Providing annual reports on the state of workforce affairs in the region  
(progress toward achieving system results)

The carrying out of these responsibilities represents the value added by the Board. It justifies the Board's existence as part of the regional workforce system.

In addition to the previously stated explicit responsibilities, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board frequently under takes actions to remain a high-performing board by:

- Holding new board members to high standards
- Focusing on policy (staying at the policy level and out of the details of planning and program operation) and being employer driven
- Watching national trends and adopting best practices based on the rapidly changing economic and workforce climate
- Keeping board members updated on current LMI and future trends
- Influencing other areas critical for workforce development, such as the PK-12 education system
- Continuing active participation in state and national associations of workforce boards and workforce associations

## **Board's Vision and Actions**

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board recently updated its strategic plan as described below.

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board is accountable for leading and governing the regional workforce system in the 13-county Gulf Coast region of Texas. It is the one and only workforce board in the region and one of its primary responsibilities is strategic planning.

The greatest challenge for us is setting the direction and focus for all workforce activities in the region, regardless of how they are funded, and to use our limited resources to leverage the larger system and achieve Board-established results. Moving the bigger system would be impossible without a strategic plan that clearly describes and precisely quantifies what results the Board expects the regional workforce system to achieve.

The Board has been engaged in a strategic planning process for several years. In 2003, we developed statements of our core values, mission and vision that explain what Board members value most, why it exists as a board, and where it wants to be at some point in the future. The Board developed results statements for the regional workforce system, both that which it directly controls and for the larger system. The Board’s strategic plan is a tool for managing the regional workforce system. Board members and staff use it to drive the regional workforce system toward the four results statements.

*The Gulf Coast workforce system is a regional network of business, education, labor, government, and community organizations serving the City of Houston and the 13-county Gulf Coast region of Texas.*

THE GULF COAST WORKFORCE BOARD  
*Employer Driven and People Powered*

Strategic Plan 2019 – 2023

<p><b>PURPOSE</b>  <i>(Why We Exist)</i></p>	<p>To keep our region a great place to do business, work, and live</p>
<p><b>MISSION</b>  <i>(What Makes Us Different)</i></p>	<p>We elevate the economic and human potential of the Gulf Coast region by anticipating and adapting to the evolution of work and personalizing our approach to fulfilling the diverse needs of the businesses and individuals we serve.</p>
<p><b>VISION</b>  <i>(The Future We Aspire To)</i></p>	<p>Our region attracts and retains the best employers, affords everyone the dignity of a job, remains vitally important to the global economy – and all within it are thriving.</p>
<p><b>VALUES &amp; BEHAVIORS</b>  <i>(Our Strongly Held Beliefs)</i></p>	<p>We are employer-driven</p> <p>We care passionately</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for others</li> <li>• Inspire hope</li> <li>• Fuel progress</li> </ul>

<b>VALUES &amp; BEHAVI ORS</b> (Continu ed)	<p>We take responsibilities seriously</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be accountable</li> <li>• Follow up and follow through</li> <li>• Drive results</li> </ul> <p>We imagine the possibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek multiple perspectives</li> <li>• Bring fresh thinking</li> <li>• Engage one another in making a difference</li> </ul>
<b>RESULTS</b> <i>(The Difference We Will Make)</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. More Competitive Employers</li> <li>2. A Better-Educated Workforce</li> <li>3. More and Better Jobs</li> <li>4. Higher Incomes</li> </ol>

The strategies for how the Board will achieve the four previously stated results and remain a high-performing Board are:

1. Continually improve the quality of customer service
2. Provide high-quality labor market information
3. Provide skilled workers for employers in critical industries
4. Contribute to high-quality, life-long learning experiences
5. Use our resources to move the larger system to achieve Board-established results
6. Meet the requirements of our funding sources
7. Find additional revenue to support Board results

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**19. A description of how training services outlined in WIOA §134 will be provided**

through the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), including, if contracts for training services will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of ITAs under that chapter, and how the Board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs, regardless of how the training services are to be provided.

## Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)

### How We Decide What Financial Aid to Offer:

Customer Request. Often customers ask us for financial aid. We evaluate a customer's request based on our understanding of her need to get a job, keep a job, or get a better job and our guidelines for providing financial aid. This evaluation is automatically included in requests for child care expenses.

Staff Suggestion. Based on our assessment of the customer and her needs, we may suggest financial aid to a customer to support completion of his or her employment plan.

Workforce Solutions helps employers meet their human resource needs and individuals build careers, so both can compete in the global economy.

To ensure that our region has an educated workforce, Workforce Solutions offers scholarships to help an individual get the basic or occupational skills and credentials he or she needs to get a job, keep a job or get a better job.

Workforce Solutions has a network of education and training vendors authorized to use our scholarship dollars for basic skills, upgrade or occupational skills training. Customers who are eligible for our scholarship assistance choose from our network providers to obtain the training they want and need.

These standards and guidelines describe the rules and process we use to build and maintain the Education and Training Vendor Network.

#### I. Categories

We have three categories of education and training vendors:

- » **Basic Skills** – Providers of adult education/literacy or GED preparation, high school diplomas, English as a Second Language, and developmental classes that prepare individuals to enter occupational skills training

- » **Occupational Skills** – Providers of certificates, associate degrees, and bachelor degrees that prepare an individual to enter employment in one of the Board’s High-Skill, High-Growth Occupations Supported by Scholarships.
- » **Upgrade** – Providers of certificate, seminar or course-based training related to one of the Board’s High-Skill, High-Growth Occupations. Short-duration workshops, seminars, or courses equip customers with industry-recognized certifications and/or build on existing skills. Upgrade training may include testing/assessment to demonstrate competency and may also include training to allow an individual to transition existing skills from one occupation or industry to another.

## II. Building the Education & Training Vendor Network

There are two principal ways in which vendors join the Workforce Solutions network.

### A. Soliciting Vendors to Fill Gaps

We solicit education and training vendors in order to fill specific gaps in our current training offerings – that is, new or specifically targeted occupations or skill needs – identified as a part of our work with the region’s employers.

At least once every year, we look at the vendors on our list and assess the availability of training in our three categories to ensure we have sufficient choices for customers.

We promote the addition of vendors to our network through the following methods:

- » Publicizing education and training vendor opportunities on our website  
<http://wrksolutions.com>
- » Soliciting vendors for specific needs related to a particular industry, occupation, or geographic location

### B. Open Application

We accept applications from vendors at any time for

- » Basic skills training
- » Occupational skills training for our High-Skill, High-Growth Occupations supported by Workforce Solutions scholarships
- » Upgrade training related to our High-Skill, High-Growth Occupations

### III. Applying to be a Vendor

#### A. Selecting the Appropriate Application

We have two different applications for education and training vendors. Those who apply to offer basic skills training use our Basic Skills Training Application. Vendors who want to offer occupational skills or upgrade training apply using the Texas Workforce Commission's Eligible Training Provider System (ETPS).

Vendors must have been providing education and training services for at least one year, and we may ask for proof, including performance information. We will not approve start-up organizations.

Workforce Solutions' Financial Aid Payment Office staff will offer technical assistance to vendors wishing to apply to be part of the network.

#### B. Application Review and Approval

- » Workforce Solutions' Financial Aid Payment Office processes and approves vendor applications.
- » The application review and approval process for basic skills training may take up to 60 days to complete.
- » The application review and approval process for occupational skills or upgrade training may take up to 120 days.
- » All approved education and training vendor programs are listed on our Education & Training Vendor Network to provide easy access for our customers to approved programs and providers.
- » If we deny an application, we will provide the applicant vendor with a written description of the denial and explain why.
- » Once we approve an application, the Financial Aid Payment Office will contact the vendor to sign a vendor agreement, if one does not already exist.
- » Approving a vendor's application to place basic skills, occupational skills or upgrade training for one or more programs on our network does not mean we guarantee that any of our customers will choose that vendor or program. When we approve a vendor's application, we make that vendor available to our customers, should any of them choose that vendor and its program for training.
- » Occupational skills training vendor program(s) (i.e. curriculum, credential, etc) must prepare students for employment within an occupation on our High-Skill, High-Growth Occupations

Supported by Scholarship list.

- » Similarly, upgrade training must help students gain additional skills or credentials related to our High-Skill, High-Growth Occupations list.

### C. Renewal

1. Vendors must renew programs on the Education & Training Vendor Network annually.
2. We process renewals for the basic skills in the same way we process new applications.
3. Currently, occupational skills and upgrade training programs are certified through 2017. We will provide information before the end date for these programs about how vendors may recertify. We may request updated information from the vendor before renewing the application.

## IV. Evaluating Performance

**A. Occupational Skills and Upgrade.** We evaluate the effectiveness of a vendor's occupational skills and upgrade training programs by compiling performance information in the following critical areas:

- » Attained Credential Rate (at least 60% of students attain a credential)
- » Entered Employment Rate (at least 60% of students get a job after training)
- » Average Hourly Wage at Placement (student earnings must be at least 80% of the statewide average entry-level hourly wage for the occupation as displayed in the performance area of the application on ETPS)

**B. Basic Skills.** For basic skills training programs, we gather performance information regarding attained credential and completion rate (at least 60% of students attain a credential or complete training).

**C. Customer Satisfaction.** Occasionally, we may survey our customers who have used basic skills, occupational skills or upgrade training vendors and ask for feedback on the vendors and their programs. We may use the results in evaluating vendors.

**D. Report Card.** We will publish performance results for all Education & Training Vendor Network members and programs at least annually in our Training Provider Report Card. We may also publish results of customer satisfaction surveys.

**E. Monitoring.** We visit vendors periodically to monitor performance, payment arrangements, and training delivery.

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**20. A description of how one-stop centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and by one-stop partners.**

### **One-Stop Intake Technology and Case Management Information Systems**

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board recognizes the importance of using data to drive decision-making and has made availability and evaluation of data a key part of its strategic development and oversight processes and consumer education efforts.

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board and its one stop career offices have access to a number of state provided Labor Market Information and Career Exploration Services such as:

- **Texas Rapid Access to Career and Economic Resources (TRACER)** website provides employment statistics to assist job seekers and employers in making informed decisions
- **Wage Information Network (WIN)** allows users to examine wage data for an area – or within an industry in an area – and to compare that wage with other areas of the state.
- **Standard Occupational Components for Research and Analysis of Trends in Employment System (SOCRATES)** at <http://socrates.cdr.state.tx.us> and other robust tools made available by LMCI were designed to assist local planners in gaining insight into their labor market structure, characteristics, and patterns
- **Reality Check** – TexasRealityCheck.com (<http://www.texasrealitycheck.com>) is one of the more frequently used resources in the LMCI tool box and also features a widely used iPhone application. The website allows students to make lifestyle choices, create a budget, and then view the occupations and preferred education levels that support those choices.
- **Texas Career Alternatives Resource Evaluation System (Texas CARES)** – Texas CARES at [www.texascaresonline.com](http://www.texascaresonline.com) is a multimedia career information system designed for individuals to explore different careers and related educational opportunities in Texas and around the world.
- **Texas Consumer Resource on Education and Workforce Statistics (Texas CREWS)** –

TexasCREWS at <http://www.txcrews.org> is a dashboard tool that provides information about Texas' public two-year and four-year postsecondary institutions; evaluates 30 programs/institutions on the basis of resulting wages and student loan levels; and enables parents and students to make informed decisions about college and thereby obtain the best return on their educational investment.

- The Board also has access to State provided Participant Eligibility, Service Tracking, and Case Management Systems:
- **WorkInTexas.com** – WorkInTexas.com is Texas' Labor Exchange System, as mandated by the Wagner-Peyser Act, and operated in cooperative effort with JobCentral, the National Labor Exchange system. WorkInTexas.com is a comprehensive online job search resource and job matching system developed and maintained by TWC, and provides:
  - » extensive job matching options based on skills and experience;
  - » links to labor market and career development information; and
  - » free, 24-hour-a-day access.

Employers can post jobs, search résumés, recruit candidates, get labor market information, and receive a variety of other services available through a network of statewide Workforce Solutions Offices. Individuals seeking a new job, different job, or an additional job can post their résumé, search job listings (including Texas state agency jobs), obtain employer contact information to apply for jobs, get information about the job market, and receive a variety of other services also available through Workforce Solutions Offices.

- **The Workforce Information System of Texas (TWIST)** – TWIST is the integrated intake, eligibility, case management, and reporting system for employment and training services. It was designed as a central repository for customer information. TWIST ultimately decreases duplication within and across the Texas workforce system while streamlining the provision of services to customers. It enables Workforce Solutions Office staff to enter intake information for customers only once for multiple employment and training programs and to retrieve it statewide. TWIST also includes interfaces with other automated systems – WorkInTexas.com, the UI benefits system, and the Texas Health and Human Services Commission's system
- **Child Care Attendance Automation** – Child Care Attendance Automation (CCAA) allows parents to record attendance using a swipe card at a point-of-service device located at the authorized child care facility. Parents also can use an interactive voice response system using the authorized child care provider's phone. Attendance recorded through CCAA is transferred to TWIST on a weekly basis, and TWIST is used to process payments to providers based on the CCAA attendance records.
- **Texas Educating Adults Management System (TEAMS)** – TEAMS is Texas' state-of-the-art, web-

enabled system that maintains student-level data, including demographic, assessment, and outcome data, as well as class, site, program, and provider information. TEAMS users can analyze class, site, or program information through the use of standard reports generated at the user level. TEAMS provides a wide range of information about adult education, including snapshots of student and program performance, personnel qualifications, and staff development activities.

- **Cash Draw and Expenditure Reporting** – TWC’s online Cash Draw and Expenditure Reporting (CDER) system is a web application used by Boards to draw funds from their program allocations. All financial transactions are handled through this online system, and Boards are no longer required to submit paper documents or Excel spreadsheets. CDER has significantly decreased manual processing and greatly improved the reporting of data to all parties.
- **Quarterly Wage Records** – TWC makes extensive use of quarterly wage records, both for required and ad hoc reporting. TWC uses Texas wage records and those obtained from other states through the Wage Record Interchange System (WRIS) for required WIOA, Wagner-Peyser, and Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) reporting. A fuller discussion of the use of quarterly wage records is contained in the Program Data section of this plan.

**21. The Board policy to ensure that priority for adult individualized career services and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient, consistent with WIOA §134(c)(3)(E) and §680.600 of the Final Regulations.**

## **Financial Aid Criteria for Customers**

Workforce Solutions dollars for financial aid are limited. Sometimes we have more eligible customers requesting financial aid than we have funds at the moment. When that happens, we place eligible customers on a wait list, or registry.

- As funds become available for customers on our wait list, we offer financial aid to customers using priority criteria and the date of application to determine who we offer assistance to first.
- When we do not have a wait list, the priority criteria do not apply, and we offer financial aid to eligible customers on a first-come, first-served basis.

## **Applying Priority Criteria**

We apply priority criteria only when we have a wait list for substantial financial aid. We offer financial aid to

eligible customers in order of priority, using our registries.

1. Workforce Opportunity and Innovation Act Adult. We fund financial aid applications from eligible WIOA Adult First Priority customers in the order noted above. Then we fund the applications from eligible WIOA Adult Second Priority customers the in order noted above.

When there are no remaining First or Second Priority customers on the registry, we offer funding to eligible WIOA Adults on the registry in the order of their application dates.

- First Priority includes eligible WIOA Adult customers, in this order:
    - » Qualified veterans or qualified spouses who are low-income or basic skills deficient
    - » All other eligible individuals who are low-income or basic skills deficient
  - Second Priority includes eligible WIOA Adult customers, in this order:
    - » Qualified veterans or qualified spouses who are at or below the Workforce Solutions self-sufficiency income level
    - » All other eligible individuals who are at or below the Workforce Solutions self-sufficiency income level
2. Workforce Opportunity and Innovation Act Dislocated Worker. We fund financial aid applications for eligible WIOA Dislocated Worker First Priority customers and then we offer funding to eligible WIOA Dislocated Workers on the registry in the order of their application dates.
    - First Priority includes eligible WIOA Dislocated Worker customers who are:
      - » Qualified veterans or qualified spouses of veterans

Applications from eligible customers in priority groups always go to the top of a wait list.

When we do not have a wait list (i.e., there are no customers on a registry) the priority criteria do not apply. We offer financial aid to eligible customers on a first-come, first-served basis.

We offer short-term financial aid to any eligible customer requesting the assistance.

The Financial Aid Call Center determines eligibility, establishes and maintains the financial aid registries identifies customers with priority, and offers financial aid to customers using the priority criteria.

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**22. Boards may impose limits on the duration and amount of ITAs. If the state or Board chooses to do so, the limitations must be described in the Local Plan, but must not be implemented in a manner that undermines WIOA's requirement that training services are to be provided in a manner that maximizes customer choice in the selection of an Eligible Training Provider. Exceptions to ITA limitations may be provided for individual cases and must be described in Board policies.**

## **ITA Limitations**

The Board help customers who request financial assistance for training to help them get a job, keep a job, or get a better job. We advise the customer as to how we can help them achieve their goals and provide relevant information about award limits and support services. We also help identify sources of assistance in addition to WFS financial aid.

If a customer request financial assistance for training, we:

- Discuss the types of occupations and training programs in which they're interested.
- Review the High Skill/High Growth occupations list, especially those we support with scholarships\*.
- Determine suitability by checking for their understanding of the nature of the occupation they choose, their readiness to enter and complete the training, their ability to meet scholastic and financial obligations during training, and any barriers that may prevent them from being successful in that field.
- Review the approved vendors/schools.
- Review the training provider report card.
- Discuss and/or provide FAFSA website <https://fafsa.ed.gov> to get information and to submit a free application for federal student aid.
- Help identify additional sources of financial aid assistance.
- Schedule or arrange assessments as necessary.
- Begin developing the employment plan (to the extent you can based on your discussion); include steps both you and the customer will take before your next meeting, such as career exploration, assessment appointments, wage/demand research, gathering documents, creating a budget, finding a part-time job, locating other resources, etc...

Award limits apply to a 12-month period. The costs of these services are included in the total available for a Workforce Solutions scholarship. Other limits do not apply.

- Up to \$3,000 for basic skills training
- Up to \$6,000 for occupational skills training
- Up to \$6,000 for upgrade skills training

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**23. A description of the design framework for youth programs in the local area, and how the 14 program elements required in §681.460 of the Final Regulations are to be made available within that framework.**

## **Youth Program Design**

The Board intends to follow the youth design framework set forth by the Texas Workforce Commission which places an increased emphasis on individual participant needs by adding new components to the objective assessment and individual service strategy. The incorporation of career pathways as part of both the objective assessment and development of the individual service strategy will aid in the development of a successful plan for the customer. Through the expanded use of work experience and on-the-job training, the program design will meet the requirements to include effective connections to employers, including small employers, in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

### **Youth Program Design**

The design framework of Board's local youth programs will include:

- Provisions for an objective assessment of each youth participant, including a review of the academic and occupational skill levels and service needs, for the purpose of identifying appropriate services and career pathways for participants and informing the individual service strategy. The objective assessment will include a review of:
  - » basic skills;
  - » occupational skills;
  - » work experience;

- » employability;
  - » interests;
  - » aptitudes;
  - » support service needs; and
  - » developmental needs.
- Development and modification of individual service strategy for each youth participant that:
    - » is directly linked to one or more youth performance indicators;
    - » identifies appropriate career pathways that include education and employment goals;
    - » considers career planning and the results of the objective assessment; and
    - » prescribes achievement objectives and services for the participant; and
  - Provide case management of youth participants, including follow-up services. The Board will ensure that Workforce Solutions Office staff:
    - provide youth participants with information regarding the full array of services available through the Board or other providers or partners; and
    - refer youth participants to appropriate training and educational programs that have the capacity to serve them either on a sequential or concurrent basis.

In order to meet the basic skills and training needs of applicants who do not meet the eligibility requirements of a particular program or who cannot be served by the program, the Board will ensure that youth are referred for further assessment, as necessary, or referred to appropriate programs to meet the skills and training needs of the youth.

### **Youth Program Elements**

The Board will ensure that the following 14 services are available to youth participants:

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent (including a recognized certificate of attendance or similar document for individuals with disabilities) or for a recognized postsecondary credential
2. Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, as appropriate

3. Paid and unpaid work experiences that have academic and occupational education as a component of the work experience, which may include the following types of work experiences:
  - » Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year;
  - » Pre-apprenticeship programs—a program or set of strategies designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in a registered apprenticeship program and has a documented partnership with at least one, if not more, registered apprenticeship programs;
  - » Internships and job shadowing;
  - » OJT opportunities

Work experience is a planned, structured learning experience that takes place in a workplace for a limited period of time. Work experience may be paid or unpaid, as appropriate, and may take place in the private for-profit sector, the nonprofit sector, or the public sector. Labor standards apply in any work experience in which an employee/employer relationship, as defined by FLSA or applicable state law, exists.

4. Occupational skills training, which includes priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials that align with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the workforce area involved, if the Board determines that the programs meet the quality criteria described in WIOA §123.

Occupational skills training is an organized program of study that provides specific vocational skills that lead to proficiency in performing actual tasks and technical functions required by certain occupational fields at entry, intermediate, or advanced levels.

Boards must give priority consideration to training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials that align with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the workforce area. Such training must:

- » be outcome oriented and focused on an occupational goal specified in the individual service strategy;
  - » be of sufficient duration to impart the skills needed to meet the occupational goal; and
  - » result in attainment of a recognized postsecondary credential
5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster
  6. Leadership development opportunities, including community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors

Leadership development opportunities are opportunities that encourage responsibility, confidence,

employability, self-determination, and other positive social behaviors, such as:

- » exposure to postsecondary educational possibilities;
- » community and service learning projects;
- » peer-centered activities, including peer mentoring and tutoring;
- » organizational and teamwork training, including team leadership training;
- » training in decision making, including determining priorities and problem solving;
- » citizenship training, including life skills training such as parenting and work behavior training;
- » civic engagement activities that promote the quality of life in a community; and
- » other leadership activities that place youth in a leadership role such as serving on youth leadership committees, such as a Standing Youth Committee.

Positive social and civic behaviors are outcomes of leadership opportunities that are incorporated by Boards as part of their menu of services and that focus on areas that may include the following:

- » Positive attitude development;
- » Self-esteem building;
- » Openness to work with individuals from diverse backgrounds;
- » Maintaining healthy lifestyles, including being alcohol and drug free;
- » Maintaining positive social relationships with responsible adults and peers and contributing to the well-being of one's community, including voting;
- » Maintaining a commitment to learning and academic success;
- » Avoiding delinquency;
- » Postponing parenting;
- » Responsible parenting, including child support education;
- » Positive job attitudes and work skills; and
- » Keeping informed in community affairs and current events.

7. Support services, as defined in WIOA §3(59), which enable an individual to participate in WIOA activities. These services include, but are not limited to, the following:

- » Linkages to community services;
- » Assistance with transportation;
- » Assistance with child care and dependent care;
- » Assistance with housing;

- » Needs-related payments;
- » Assistance with educational testing;
- » Reasonable accommodations for youth with disabilities;
- » Referrals to health care; and
- » Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, including such items as eyeglasses and protective eye gear.

8. Adult mentoring for a duration of at least 12 months that may occur both during and after program participation

Adult mentoring for youth must:

- » be a formal relationship between a youth participant and an adult mentor that includes structured activities in which the mentor offers guidance, support, and encouragement to develop the competence and character of the youth;
- » include a mentor who is an adult other than the assigned youth case manager; and
- » at a minimum, match the youth with an individual mentor with whom the youth interacts on a face-to-face basis. Group mentoring activities and mentoring through electronic means are allowable as part of mentoring activities.

9. Follow-up services for not fewer than 12 months after the completion of participation

Follow-up services for youth may include:

- » leadership development opportunities and support services;
- » regular contact with a youth participant's employer, including assistance in addressing work-related problems;
- » assistance in securing better-paying jobs, career pathway development, and further education or training;
- » work-related peer support groups;
- » adult mentoring; and
- » services necessary to ensure the success of youth participants in employment and/or postsecondary education.

All youth participants must receive some form of follow-up services for a minimum duration of 12 months. Follow-up services may be provided beyond 12 months at the Board's discretion. The types of services provided and the duration of services must be determined based on the needs of the individual, and therefore, the type and intensity of follow-up services may differ for each participant. However,

follow-up services must include more than only a contact attempted or made for securing documentation in order to report a performance outcome.

10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate to the needs of the individual youth

11. Financial literacy education

The financial literacy education program element includes activities that:

- » support the ability of participants to create budgets, initiate checking and savings accounts, and make informed financial decisions;
- » support participants in learning how to effectively manage spending, credit, and debt, including student loans, consumer credit, and credit cards;
- » teach participants about the significance of credit reports and credit scores, what their rights are regarding their credit and financial information, how to determine the accuracy of a credit report and how to correct inaccuracies, and how to improve or maintain good credit;
- » support a participant's ability to understand, evaluate, and compare financial products, services, and opportunities and to make informed financial decisions;
- » educate participants about identity theft, ways to protect themselves from identify theft, and how to resolve cases of identity theft and in other ways understand their rights and protections related to personal identity and financial data;
- » support activities that address the particular financial literacy needs of non-English- speaking participants, including providing support through the development and distribution of multilingual financial literacy and education materials;
- » provide financial education that is age appropriate and timely, and provides opportunities to put lessons into practice, such as by access to safe and affordable financial products that enable money management and savings; and
- » implement other approaches to help participants gain the knowledge, skills, and confidence to make informed financial decisions that enable them to attain greater financial health and stability by using high quality, age appropriate, and relevant strategies and channels, including, when possible, timely and customized information, guidance, tools, and instruction.

12. Entrepreneurial skills training

Entrepreneurial skills training provides the basics of starting and operating a small business. Such training must develop the skills associated with entrepreneurship, including, but not limited to, the ability to:

- » take initiative;
- » creatively seek out and identify business opportunities;
- » develop budgets and forecast resource needs;
- » understand various options for acquiring capital and the trade-offs associated with each option; and
- » communicate effectively and market oneself and one's ideas.

Approaches to teaching youth entrepreneurial skills include, but are not limited to, the following:

- » Entrepreneurship education that provides an introduction to the values and basics of starting and running a business. Entrepreneurship education programs often guide youth through the development of a business plan and may also include simulations of business start-up and operation.
- » Enterprise development, which provides support and services that incubate and help youth develop their own businesses. Enterprise development programs go beyond entrepreneurship education by helping youth access small loans or grants needed to begin business operation and by providing more individualized attention to the development of viable business ideas.
- » Experiential programs that provide youth with experience in the day-to-day operation of a business. These programs may involve the development of a youth-run business that young people participating in the program work in and manage. Or, they may facilitate placement in apprentice or internship positions with adult entrepreneurs in the community.

13. Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the workforce area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services

14. Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training

**24. A description of how the Board will encourage Registered Apprenticeship programs in its area to register with the eligible training provider system in order to receive WIOA funding.**

## **Registered Apprenticeship**

The registered apprenticeship system provides opportunities for workers seeking high-skilled, high paying jobs and for employers seeking to build a qualified workforce. It is a unique, flexible training system that combines job-related technical instruction with structured on-the-job learning experiences. Over time, the registered apprenticeship system has evolved to address advancing technologies and to meet new training and human resource development needs.

As a Board, we work to achieve this goal by offering the following solutions to our local employers and job seekers:

- Connecting with businesses in diverse fields and advanced industry sectors to inform them of the Apprenticeship opportunity
- Consulting with employers to assist them with listing their Registered Apprenticeship programs in the Eligible Training Provider System
- Creating a solution for employers to achieve supply and demand of needed workers by tapping into our database of jobseekers

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**25. A description of the Board’s strategy and commitment to support ApprenticeshipTexas efforts across the state, as applicable.**

### **ApprenticeshipTexas**

Once Registered Apprenticeship programs are registered in the Eligible Training Provider System, the Gulf Coast Board continues to support them in the following ways:

- Providing OJT to qualified candidates
- Providing supportive services during the registered apprenticeship
- Providing AEL services as needed

## **PROVIDING ACCESS TO COMMUNITY-BASED PARTNERS AND THEIR SERVICES AS NEEDED**

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**26. A description of the process used to develop and complete incumbent worker training contracts with employers**

Workforce Solutions helps employers build a skilled and reliable workforce by using customized talent development service strategies as listed below:

1. Board staff will set the level of funding for talent development activities in its contract with the Employer Service contractor in accordance with Workforce Development Letter 06-19 and any subsequent issuances. The contract with our Employer Service contractor will include:
  - ✓ identifying how to use Workforce Solutions dollars in the mix of resources available to an employer for a talent development project
  - ✓ authorizing Workforce Solutions dollars for talent development
  - ✓ screening and recruiting candidates for the employer
  - ✓ determine candidates and employers eligible for Workforce Solutions dollars
  - ✓ Managing and maintain eligibility records.
  - ✓ Negotiating and executing talent development agreements with employers.
  - ✓ Visiting talent development sites regularly and follow up with both employers and trainees about progress.
  - ✓ Working with the Payment Office to ensure timely payments for talent development projects.
  - ✓ Keeping required records and notes in WorkInTexas, TWIST, DocuWare and FAMS.
  - ✓ Maintaining all records regardless of funds that are related to talent development activities for which Workforce Solutions pays a portion of the cost
2. Employer Service staff will structure a proposal describing how Workforce Solutions will support talent development activities, the cost of those activities, the share which Workforce Solutions can pay (if applicable), and other sources to defray costs based on the customer's need.
3. Before proceeding with talent development activities for a customer, Employer Service staff will negotiate and execute an agreement with the customer, describing the process for identifying workers to be trained, training activities and training providers responsible, timelines and benchmarks, and the structured costs of the training addressed in the proposal. The agreement will also include, and any additional actions or activities required in the agreement (i.e., recruiting, screening, referring potential new workers).
4. Employer Service will work closely with the employers, the career office system, including the financial aid support center, the payment office, adult education providers, and other training providers to ensure that Workforce Solutions fulfills its commitment to support an employer's talent development project.
5. Employer Service will track and maintain the information regarding those enrolled to determine the success of the training.

## PART C: PUBLIC COMMENT

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**27. A description of the process used by the Board, consistent with WIOA §108(d), to provide a 30-day public comment period before submission of the plan, including an opportunity to have input into the development of the Local Plan, particularly for representatives of businesses, education, and labor organizations. Comments submitted during the public comment period that represent disagreement with the plan must be submitted with the Local Plan.**

Following the announcement at the Gulf Coast Workforce Board meeting on February 5, 2019, we posted the Local Plan and attachments to our website at [www.wrksolutions.com/LocalPlan](http://www.wrksolutions.com/LocalPlan). We provided an electronic form to collect comments as well as an email address to receive comments.

Additionally, we sent an email announcement to 1,081 business, community, education and labor representatives requesting comments. Each recipient received an email solicitation on February 5, 12 and 25. The email message was opened 859 times and generated 66 click-throughs.

The comment period closed on March 7. We received a total of nine comments that are summarized below.

- An economic development leader stated: Make sure we keep everything local, this plan cannot be run from Houston. The smaller part just go away. Keep our offices and support near us, and make sure they have the ability to be our friends and neighbors. Education make sure the dollars are available for rural settings where a few dollars will go a long way in helping us reach our goals.
- A community-based organization stated: The content of this Local Workforce Development Plan was detailed and very organized. It surely addressed and highlighted the economic challenges this region has faced and the results in growth from its collaborative efforts. My analysis on the regional workforce development would include a more strategic approach to eliminating barriers to employment for our immigrant, veteran, and homeless communities. Great resource of information and a vital tool for all community partners.

- A community-based organization stated: I think the local plan is great and all tools will be an asset in the work we do serving those persons trying to move themselves to a point of self-sufficiency.
- A community college stated: Thank you for this valuable resource. The information shared is used in organizing for grants; identifying areas of program development, and in anticipating needs of our community in regard to training.
- Two employers indicated their hiring needs including: CDL Hazmat Tanker and Passenger endorsements NCCER certified RT Forklift, Ironworker & CSST Operate skidsteer, rubber tire, mini x, Welding and Blacksmithing.
- Two training providers suggested increased staff training and communications to better help shared customers navigate financial aid processes.
- One employer requested help to fill an immediate job opening.

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board will use the community input to strengthen implementation of the Local Plan.