

**YOUTH PLAN**  
**LWA 12**  
**(Modified June 30, 2009)**

**Background of Local Workforce Area 12:**

Local Workforce Area (LWA) 12 is comprised of Bureau, LaSalle, Lee and Putnam Counties in the north central part of Illinois, within 100 miles of the major metropolitan areas of Chicago, Peoria, Joliet and Rockford. LWA 12 is rural in nature with a population of 188,539 (*Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Counties of Illinois: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2008 – U.S. Census Bureau*). The largest single city in the four-county area is Ottawa, with a population of 18,307.

Like many other areas throughout the United States, LWA 12 has been severely impacted by the current recession. The local unemployment rate is traditionally higher than that of both the state and the country, and as of April, 2009, the unemployment rate was 10.2%, compared to 9.4% for the state and 8.9% nationally.

Labor Market data available through 2008 shows that Manufacturing is still the dominant sector in WIA 12, both in terms of numbers of workers and in wages paid. Prior to the recent economic downturn, it had even seen job growth in the local area. (*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Local Employment Dynamics*) The largest sectors that show the highest growth in the area, however are retail and administrative services. The types of jobs within these industries are generally characterized by lower wages, fewer benefits, less opportunity for advancement and high turnover. Wholesale Trade, due to the growth of the warehouse and logistics sector, has become an important sector in the area. While wages in this sector are above those in retail and services, they are still less than those in manufacturing and construction. The impact of the changing industry mix is certain to affect the local economy. With the median household income for LWA 12 ranging from \$44,204 (\$21.25/hour) to \$49,518 (\$23.8/hour), most families will require 2 wages earners to meet this level. (*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2007 American Community Survey*)

These various employment and labor market issues will be addressed through the leadership and direction of NCI Works and the local Chief Elected Officials of the four counties. The Board consists of a solid balance between public and private members, with large and small businesses appropriately represented among the private sector. The commitment and support of the local elected officials is evidenced by their desire to have a representative on the local workforce investment board. This mix of members almost certainly guarantees that the workforce investment system created by their input and recommendations will enhance the quality of life for all residents of LWA 12 and make its labor force more competitive with those around it.

**I. Local Youth Needs Analysis and Assessment:** As an initial step in developing a long-range vision for the local workforce investment system, it is important to take stock of the current needs of the system’s potential youth customers.

A. Current and projected customer needs.

Describe the needs of local youth, including low-income youth. In particular, examine the needs of low-income youth in terms of the changing educational and skill requirements of the local economy. How well are low-income (i.e., WIA-eligible) youth currently being prepared for the projected job openings and skill demands identified for adult job seekers? How well are youth with the following characteristics being prepared for the projected job openings and skill demands identified for adult job seekers?

- Deficient in basic literacy skills;
- School dropout;
- Homeless, runaway or foster child;
- Pregnant or parenting;
- Offender

**Response:**

One of the major challenges facing the youth in our local area is that the available jobs, particularly for the first-time or young wage earners, tend to be in the lower-skilled, lower-paying Services and Retail industries. Furthermore, most youth either are not exposed to good labor market information early enough or are not knowledgeable enough to properly use it to find alternative occupations or to design career paths beyond those minimum wage or lower paying jobs.

The Youth component of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) ~~like the Job Training Partnership Act,~~ is designed to target low-income youth, **who** ~~These young people~~ generally possess characteristics (e.g., basic skills deficiency, pregnant/teen parent, offender, etc.) which make learning or getting a job more difficult. ~~Table 1 provides data from the last three full years of JTPA that illustrates the high percentage of barriers to employment common among low income youth.~~ **Compounding this challenge in today’s economy is the high number of lay offs and plant closings in the LWA 12 area. The emerging workers, then, are now competing with older, more mature workers who have a solid work history and years of experience in a given field or industry sector.**

WIA provides a list of these barriers, one of which must be met in addition to meeting the low-income status. However, the last in this list of barriers is the category “requires additional assistance to complete an educational program, or to secure and hold employment”. In keeping with the principles of local flexibility and empowering local boards, the Act allows local areas to identify other characteristics and behaviors that make the youth at risk of dropping out or failing in the labor market. ~~Workforce Investment Board #12~~ **NCI Works** has determined that the following list of characteristics and behaviors that may serve as indicators of youth who may

have a more difficult time of obtaining and retaining employment, or entering and remaining in school/training are:

- Limited or no work history
- Under 16 years of age, due to limited opportunities to obtain employment
- One or more grade levels behind year in school
- Possesses one or more disabilities
- Second generation welfare
- Under 18 years if age at the birth of first child
- Aged out of the Illinois Child Welfare System
- Recommendation of high school counselor
- Under the supervision of the probation office
- **Lack of significant work experience in their field of study at a post-secondary institution either completed or currently in progress (Older Youth only)**

The Workforce Investment Act also requires local workforce investment boards to define “deficient in basic literacy skills” based on the needs of the local area. Like the State, Workforce Investment Board #12 has determined that “deficient in basic literacy skills” shall mean an individual who: 1). Computes or solves problems, reads, writes, or speaks English at or below grade level 8.9, or 2). Is unable to compute or solve problems, read, write or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual’s family or society. Furthermore, it has determined that anyone who meets the definition of “deficient in Basic literacy skills” is to be considered to be “basic skills deficient”.

Changing educational and training requirements by employers are increasing the need for post-secondary education. Increased technical expertise necessary for the higher paying jobs is putting increased pressure on the educational system to decrease the drop out rate and to increase educational levels. ~~Employment projections prepared by the Illinois Department of Employment Security estimate that employment in LWA 12 will increase by almost 9,200 jobs and over 40% of these will require some type of post high school training or education.~~ **Of the employers surveyed in the 2007 North Central Illinois State of the Workforce Report, only 5.3% of them indicated they wanted to hire workers with less than a high school diploma. Therefore, NCI Works through its Youth Council emphasizes services and programs that target dropouts and at-risk youth. For the past several years, NCI Works and the LWA 12 CEO’s have approved two service providers, Streator High School and the Lee/Ogle Regional Office of Education, who work with these populations through credit recovery and GED programs. For PY ’09, two additional providers, Hall High School and the Bureau, Henry Stark Regional Office of Education, have been approved to deliver similar programs, thus increasing the impact on these targeted populations.**

**Several years ago, the Youth Council directed BEST, Inc., the Title IB Youth Programs Administrator, to develop a program targeting youth currently in the juvenile justice system. Staff collaborated with the local Youth Probation staff and developed “In Control of Myself, Motivation and New Destinations”, or I COMMAND, a combination classroom and work program. The intent of this was to provide an interactive, small group atmosphere for youth with**

barriers to employment as a result of their offender status. This program has met with minimal success but continues to be available to youth as needed.

As the workforce leader in LWA 12, NCI Works recognizes the importance of career awareness opportunities for youth. Too often youth of today have little or no knowledge of the vast number of possibilities available to them as they begin to think about what they want to be “when they grow up”; nor do they fully understand employer expectations when applying for or being hired for a job. Therefore, the Youth Council fully endorses and encourages career awareness activities as much as possible. Staff for LWA 12 take youth on field trips to local businesses, including new businesses in the alternative energy fields, and bring in speakers to share career information directly with the youth.

Through the Technical Assistance funds made available by DCEO, LWA 12 offered employers in manufacturing, healthcare and logistics the opportunity to engage youth in a career awareness event called, “Work in the Real World”. Youth who are in Career and Tech Ed programs at the local high schools, as well as other youth who are not likely to enter four-year colleges are targeted for participation. Employers were invited to set up booths and make presentations to youth on career opportunities, salary and benefits of occupations within their companies, employer expectations of employees, and education and training requirements for the various occupations. In the past, BEST, Inc. collaborated with Regional Offices of Education, Education for Employment entities, community colleges, and of course, local businesses to ensure the success of these events. In addition to TA money, Carl Perkins money was used to fund these activities. For PY '09, non-WIA funding as well as Carl Perkins funding will be used to support the “Work in the Real World” events. The event that will be coordinated with LWIA #4 will have a “green theme” and will make information on green careers available to youth.

Since September 2004, LWIA #12 has offered employers in manufacturing, healthcare and logistics the opportunity to engage youth in a career awareness event called, “Work in the Real World”. Youth who are in Career and Tech Ed programs at the local high schools, as well as other youth who are not likely to enter four-year colleges are targeted for participation. Employers are invited to set up booths and make presentations on career opportunities, salary and benefits of occupations within their companies, employer expectations of employees, and education and training requirements for the various occupations. Forty (40) youth, 14 employers and 3 teachers attended the first “Work in the Real World”. This career awareness event has become increasingly popular with all three groups, and in PY '08 263 youth, 30 businesses and 17 teachers/guidance counselors attended. NCI Works is extremely proud of this successful collaborative initiative and uses it as one example of how the board responds directly to employer needs.

In the past, BEST, Inc. collaborated with Regional Offices of Education, Education for Employment entities, community colleges, and of course, local businesses to ensure the success of these events. From PY '04 through PY '07 Technical Assistance funds from DCEO, along with money from Carl Perkins grants funded these events. Beginning in PY 08, Carl Perkins money was used to fund these activities, and in PY '09, non-WIA funding as well as Carl Perkins funding will be used to support the “Work in the Real World” events. The event that

will be coordinated with LWIA #4 will have a “green theme” in PY '09 and will make information on green careers available to youth who participate.

~~Currently, a wide mix of services is provided to low-income youth to help prepare them for projected job openings in the area. Through the local JTPA program, two high schools participated in a special project for a select group of students who were determined to be at risk of dropping out. These students were enrolled in a competency-based pre-employment, entrepreneurial program that also involved hands-on manufacturing experience. By combining classroom and work-based learning, successful JTPA-eligible students earned ½ credit toward graduation, became more aware of the local labor market picture and increased their employability skills. Also available for in-school students are group and/or individual tutoring programs in which they can enroll at local Housing Authorities sites if they are residents or in most of the local high schools.~~

Youth who have a high school diploma or GED are assisted with post-high school expenses through a number of financial sources such as WIA, PELL Grants, MAP Grants, and the Office of Rehabilitation Services. They are also encouraged to visit the local Illinois ~~Employment and Training~~ **workNet** Centers to take advantage of the numerous ~~publications and software programs~~ **resources, including Illinois workNet**, which provide information on the labor market, job openings, job seeking techniques, etc.

The needs of youth dropouts are examined and appropriate referrals are made to alternative schools, community college adult learning centers, Job Corps, Illinois ~~Employment and Training Centers~~, **workNet**, BEST, Inc. and any other agency that provides educational and employment assistance. As already noted, the educational and technical requirements for employment in the area is increasing; therefore, every effort is made to encourage young dropouts to return to school in order to obtain their high school diploma. Counseling is also provided to assist them in making informed decisions regarding additional education and training which they will need to advance along their chosen career paths.

Since the implementation of WIA, youth who possess characteristics that present additional challenges to employment (e.g., basic skills deficient, school dropout, homeless, runaway, foster child, offender, pregnant/parenting teen, etc.) are now served by a partnering service system. Although most agencies and institutions do an outstanding job of providing their specialized services to their targeted population through WIA, contracts have allowed the expertise of agencies/organizations to flourish. **One** example would be Streator High School Bridge Program. In the Bridge Program, out-of-school youth are assigned to a computer lab with two instructors. Each youth is encouraged to work at his/her own pace, and attain credits towards a high school diploma. During the year, the students are able to focus on one subject for an extended period of time in order to attain that credit. Students are also given credit for work readiness classes as well as maintaining work placement.

**Another example is the Lee/Ogle Regional Office of Education Learning Improvement through Non-traditional Curriculum, or LINC Program. This program focuses primarily on out-of-school youth but may serve at-risk in-school if appropriate. Students will participate in academic activities which can be computer-based or assigned from targeted work for completion of GED**

tests. They will also be involved in a career-focused instruction to help prepare them for the future. LWA 12 recognized that it is easy to reward honor students for their achievements. However, it is perhaps even more necessary to acknowledge the achievements of a youth who, with a little encouragement and guidance, may realize that s/he, too, is a special person, who can graduate from high school and become a productive and valuable member of her/his community.

## B. Identification of key youth customer segments

### Youth Population Segments

Given the analysis of the needs of local youth are there segments of the local youth population which can be identified as key customers for the workforce investment system?

#### **Response:**

All youth could be potential customers of the workforce investment system because there are elements within the system that will benefit each one of them at some point during their lives, whether it be their academic, professional or personal lives. However, the key customers of the workforce investment system will be those youth who have multiple barriers preventing them from becoming successful members of the local workforce. The term “system” implies that the services to be offered will be coordinated and integrated into an overall delivery strategy. Therefore, the plan will be to tap into the resources and expertise of each and every agency and institution that can ultimately result in the total development of youth in LWA 12.

It is important to note when identifying youth customers that a comprehensive system supported by all partnering agencies can be designed to provide complete and necessary services to any and all youth. However, all parties must also acknowledge that due to certain legislative requirements, there will be some funding which can only be spent on “eligible” youth. WIA Title I Youth money, for example, must be spent on low-income youth. Restrictions such as these serve only to reinforce the need for all partners to contribute their services and expertise to the whole workforce investment system.

The other obvious key customers of the workforce investment system will be the potential employers for whom all partners in the system will be preparing the eventual young job seekers. The input of the private sector NCI Works board members along with that of the Youth Council members will be crucial to assuring that the comprehensive youth system is designed in such a way to assure the expectations of employers are met.

## C. Policy and programmatic implications of the local needs analysis

### 1. Resource implications

What are the resource implications of the identified youth customer needs (in particular the supportive services needs of youth customers)? Will the funds made available through WIA Title I be sufficient to meet these identified needs?

**Response:**

If the key customers of the workforce investment system are to be youth with multiple barriers, a multitude of services will be needed to develop them into productive members of society. ~~No one agency or entity alone will have the resources to do this and certainly WIA Title I funding alone will be insufficient for this purpose, particularly since funds under the Act can only be spent on low income individuals. Again using the last three full years (Program Year 1996, Program Year 1997 and Program Year 1998) of JTPA as a basis, Service Delivery Area (SDA) 12 has increased the amount of resources it has committed to youth activities: \$809,613, \$896,437 and \$915,572, respectively. The estimated allocation for the first year of WIA is \$711,033, a decrease of over 12% from the lowest spending level of the three years and a decrease of over 22% from the highest spending level. Therefore, coordination and maximum use of all resources in the LWA will be essential to a successful youth development system.~~ **Decreased funding in recent years has made it essential for BEST, Inc. to coordinate with other partners in order to maximize the resources of each entity. Though the WIA youth allocation has increased for PY '09, it simply makes sense to continue or even expand collaborative efforts, not only to maximize funding, but also to allow all stakeholders in the youth system to provide services in their areas of expertise.**

~~Expenditures for supportive services have increased significantly during this same time period. In Program Year 1996, \$12,309 (2% of the total) was spent on costs such as child care, transportation, health and emergency needs; \$30,255 (3% of the total) in Program Year 1997; and \$59,781 (7% of the total) in Program Year 1998. Given the fact that youth with multiple barriers are more in need of financial assistance with these costs, the large cut in funding for youth programs in Program Year 2000 will necessitate assuring every alternative source of funding is utilized.~~ **will be planned at levels necessary to ensure successful participation and completion by youth. The current downturn in the economy will make it especially hard for youth to find even part-time jobs that could sustain them during participation, so assistance with supportive services such as child care, transportation, health and emergency needs will be made available as needed.**

**Obviously, ARRA funding will be extremely welcomed in PY '09. However, NCI Works recognizes that it is one-time only money, and has already determined that the vast majority of the funds should be dedicated to the 2009 summer youth program. Therefore, Recovery Act funds will not be relied upon to sustain any long-term initiatives.**

2. Workforce education and training implications

What are the workforce education and training opportunity implications of the identified youth customer needs? Will workforce education and training opportunities be available in the area to meet the identified needs?

**Response:**

A thorough assessment will be done on all youth and special needs or barriers will be identified at that time. All partnering agencies will provide a matrix of the services it can provide to eligible youth and an individual service strategy will be developed accordingly. Based on ~~a survey of the LWA~~ **that assessment**, it appears there are adequate opportunities available to meet the identified needs of the youth customers **in LWA 12** as long as these services are provided through a coordinated delivery system **and funding for any agency or agencies does not decrease substantially**.

**II. Local Strategic Vision and Goals:** Following the assessment of the local youth-related workforce investment system requested in Section I, it is the purpose of this section to develop and describe the vision and goals of the system over the five years covered by the plan. In this section, you will identify the local workforce development goals which will include your response to the youth customer needs identified in Section I.

A. Provide (in a few paragraphs) the local vision for implementation, development, use and improvement of the youth workforce development system. This section should specifically address the following questions, while relating each goal to the customer needs identified in Section I:

1. Generally, how will the local workforce development system be developed and utilized in order to meet the youth customer needs identified in Section I?
2. What are the primary workforce development goals relating to youth for the local area?
3. What state or federal policies or regulations have been identified which inhibit the achievement of these local youth-related workforce development system goals?

**Response:**

The assessment of the current youth system in LWA 12 identified services as being provided through a somewhat ~~diseennected~~ **underfunded** delivery mechanism. The vision of **NCI Works LWIB**, the CEOs and all partners in LWA 12 is to ~~have~~ **maximize the resources of each partner/stakeholder in the local area by having** a fully comprehensive and integrated youth development system which will prepare young job seekers to become productive members of the local workforce and of society in general. The matrix of agencies and their contributions to this vision indicates that the basis is there for developing such a system. Through a concerted effort of NCI Works members, Youth Council members and the

agencies serving youth in any capacity, a complete menu of services will be made available to youth from which they can select the appropriate blend of support to address needs, concerns and obstacles affecting their development. Only if all partners are willing to buy into this vision and provide their specialized services to the youth participants will this fully integrated system succeed. Achieving the performance standards becomes the responsibility of the system and not just one or two partners, and it will be up to the Youth Council and NCI Works to make sure these goals are achieved.

Goals for the LWA should be identified in terms of specific customer groups.

For in-school youth the major focus will be:

- A. To encourage secondary school completion or attainment of a GED certificate,
- B. To encourage post-secondary training, and
- C. To provide adequate preparation for entry into the workforce through:
  - 1. Exposure to labor market/career exploration information
  - 2. Work readiness instruction
  - 3. Job shadowing or internships
  - 4. Building social interaction skills such as self-esteem, communication, teamwork, etc.

To accomplish these goals, the in-school youth strategy is to offer year-round “mobile” case management on-site in the local ~~IETCs~~ **NCI Works One Stop Center, An Illinois workNet Center**, and satellites, public facilities such as city halls and at local high schools where permitted. This intensive one-on-one interaction is designed to provide academic, personal and/or workforce preparation support as needed. Coordination between partners such as area high schools and alternative schools, Youth Service Bureau, law enforcement agencies and the Business Employment Skills Team, Inc. is anticipated to successfully carry out this strategy.

For out-of-school youth the major focus will be:

- A. To encourage returning to school or attaining a GED certificate, where appropriate,
- B. To encourage post-secondary school training, and
- C. To provide adequate preparation for entry into the workforce through:
  - 1. Exposure to labor market/career exploration information
  - 2. Work readiness instruction
  - 3. Internships and paid work experience
  - 4. Building social interaction skills such as self-esteem, communication, teamwork, etc.

The strategy for the out-of-school youth, while still involving the year-round intensive case management, is shaded more towards employment experiences and opportunities than the in-school which emphasizes workforce preparation. Youth without high school diplomas or GEDs will be encouraged to return to school or attend alternative instruction, and youth with insufficient occupational skills will receive training through approved training institutions or on-site at the workplace. Based upon the results of the Individual Service Strategy and the

assessment results, this academic and/or vocational training can be offered prior to or simultaneously with the employment opportunities, whichever best meets the needs of the youth.

For employers the major focus will be:

- A. To provide them with a qualified, dependable workforce,
- B. To continuously improve and enhance their workforce through post-employment and retention activities for their employees, and
- C. To streamline the mechanism for hiring and training employees by developing a coordinated workforce investment system with all parties involved in the process.

Since employers have also been identified as customers, expectations have been defined for them as well. They will be asked to take an active role in the hiring process for all youth by conducting actual interviews with applicants, assisting in the development of a training outline and verifying the skill attainments youth acquire on the job. Through “mobile” case management, staff will work closely with the employers and the youth to make sure these new workers are adequately exposed to the world of work and its requirements.

Though most of the activity and interaction will be done at the local level, the state and federal contribution to a successful workforce system would be to avoid imposing unnecessary policies, rules, regulations, restrictions, etc. The WIA acknowledges the crucial role of LWIBs in developing a qualified workforce by empowering its members with major policy and decision-making authority. Federal and state policies and/or requirements which would diminish that role will only lead to frustration and high turnover on the part of Board members. Therefore, as a general statement LWIBs and CEOs should be allowed to be as independent and autonomous as possible.

**III. Local System Infrastructure and Services:** In this section describe the local systems through which youth services will be provided, and then the services themselves. These systems and services should be designed to meet the customer needs identified in Section I, and the workforce development system goals identified in Section II.

A. Procurement Procedures

Describe local policies and procedures for competitive procurement of providers of youth activities. In accordance with §123, describe how the recommendations of the youth council will form the basis for this procurement.

**Response:**

~~A complete and thorough survey of the local area will be conducted to determine which services are already being offered, by whom and how they are funded. The results of this survey will be forwarded to the LWIB and/or Youth Council. Every effort will be made to utilize existing agencies as a first source of funding for the services. Where there are gaps in available services, a coordinated plan of action will be developed with the interested agency(ies) to design and implement an appropriate strategy to fill those gaps.~~

Each year NCI Works lets out generic Request-for-Proposals to which interested parties can respond. The proposals are reviewed and rated by members of the Youth Council and NCI Works, with recommendations for funding/not funding made to the Board.

Criteria to be used in awarding grants for youth activities under WIA will include:

1. Design and delivery mechanism, with special consideration given to applied learning and “hands-on” programs
2. Past experience with the target population
3. Cost effectiveness
4. Versatility of program content
5. Linkages with other partner agencies within the youth system

Criteria to be used in identifying effective or ineffective providers will include:

1. Degree of attainment of established performance goals/measures
2. Customer satisfaction results
3. Compliance with contractual provisions
4. Level of cooperation between the provider and all other agencies

Information and data obtained through this process will be presented to NCI Works LWIB and/or Youth Council for awarding new contracts or continuing/extending existing contracts. Both the project and the provider will be evaluated for recommendation of funding/not funding in the future.

As stated previously, LWA 12 is comprised of 4 rural counties. Although a number of schools, agencies and institutions have been identified as providers of youth services, response to Request-for-Proposals (RFPs) let out by the Youth Council to provide funding for any or all of the 10 required program elements has been minimal. Each time an RFP or Request-for-Quotes (RFQ) for youth programs was **has been** let out, only a few responses were ever received and, with a rare exception ~~or two~~, all were funded. NCI Works anticipates this will continue to be the trend.

It is a matter of record that attempts to procure youth services through a competitive process as required by the Act have fallen short of expectations in the past. In spite of this, the NCI Works Youth Council believes it has met the intent of the law through due diligence and good faith efforts. However, should the Youth Council ever determine that there are an inadequate or insufficient number of responses to the RFPs/RFQs let out, ~~the Council~~ NCI Works retains the right to **provide make sure** any and/or all of the 10 elements **are provided** in whatever way it deems appropriate in order to carry out its responsibility under the Act.

This may include offering any of the allowable activities through the Business Employment Skills Team, Inc., the local grant sub-recipient; mainstreaming youth in community college programs; or continuing attempts to award grants/contracts on a competitive basis through either traditional or non-traditional methods. It is the feeling of the NCI Works Youth Council that pursuing this course of action is in the best interest of the local youth and that it is preferable to running the risk that their needs go unmet. Regardless of the method utilized for procuring the programs/services under these circumstances, approval by NCI Works would be required **through the annual plan process. At a minimum, RFPs will be let out and approved on an annual basis according to the following schedule: RFP mailing in February, returned back to BEST, Inc. in March, rated and presented at the April Youth Council meeting for conditional approval (contingent on allocation). Approvals will be presented at the May NCI Works meeting for conditional approval (contingent on allocation). Should the Youth Council and/or NCI Works deem it necessary to let out additional RFPs, a similar time frame will be implemented.**

#### B. Non-income eligibility

If applicable, describe youth (as identified by the local board) who face serious barriers to employment, and will be considered an exception to the minimum income criteria for eligibility under this program as described in Section 129(c)(5)(H) of the WIA.

#### **Response:**

The law allows up to 5% of youth served under Title I to be an exception to the income criteria for eligibility provided that they are within one or more of the following categories:

- (1) School dropout;
- (2) Basic skills deficient (i.e., the individual has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level on a generally accepted standardized test or a comparable score on a criterion-referenced test.);
- (3) One or more grade levels below the grade level appropriate to the individual's age;
- (4) Pregnant or parenting;
- (5) Possess one or more disabilities, including learning disabilities;
- (6) Homeless or runaway;
- (7) Offender; or
- (8) Face serious barriers to employment as identified by the Local Board.

The Youth Council and/or **NCI Works** ~~LWIB of LWA-12~~ have identified the following as "serious barriers to employment":

- a. Minimal/poor work history which will be defined as:
  - A non-seasonal job that lasted less than 3 months, or
  - Was fired from or quit, other than for another job, more than two jobs.
- b. Truant or excessively absent from school.
- c. Members of a Single-Parent Household.

- d. **Lack of significant work experience in their field of study at a post-secondary institution either completed or currently in progress (Older Youth only)**

### C. Services to Special Populations

1. Describe the services which will be made available to special populations. These populations should include the key youth customer segments identified in accordance with Section I.B of these local planning guidelines. They may also include any or all of the following populations:
  - Low-income individuals
  - Migrant and seasonal workers
  - Public assistance recipients
  - Women
  - Minorities
  - Individuals training for nontraditional employment
  - Individuals with multiple barriers to employment

#### **Response:**

The key customers identified in Section I.B. are youth who have multiple barriers preventing them from becoming successful members of the local workforce. In addition, there are youth with special needs (e.g., pregnant/parenting teen, youth with disabilities, dropouts, etc.) or youth who fall into the special populations listed above who would also be appropriate for receiving services through the coordinated workforce investment system. Some of the services that would be provided would be specific to a particular category of youth (e.g., GED instruction to dropouts, child care assistance to a parenting teen, etc.). However, because the needs of these youth are likely to be rather complex and varied, it is more likely that there will be a combination of services deemed appropriate for most of the youth who will be served in the LWA.

Therefore, a thorough assessment will be done on each young applicant and the appropriate blend of services will be provided from the following:

- 1) tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to secondary school completion, including dropout prevention strategies;
- 2) alternative secondary school offerings;
- 3) summer employment opportunities directly linked to academic and occupational learning;
- 4) paid and unpaid work experiences, including internships and job shadowing;
- 5) occupational skill training;
- 6) leadership development opportunities, which may include such activities as positive social behavior and soft skills, decision making, team work, and other activities;
- 7) supportive services;

- 8) adult mentoring for a duration of at least twelve (12) months, that may occur both during and after program participation;
- 9) follow-up services; and
- 10) comprehensive guidance and counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse counseling, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate to the needs of the individual youth

## 2. WIA Program Services to Special Populations

### D. Description of Youth Activities

Provide a description of the youth activities which will be made available in the local area. This description should indicate how the proposed activities will help to meet the goals identified in Section II, as well as how they will help to meet the customer needs identified in Section I. This description of youth activities should include descriptions of the following:

1. Provide a description of the key design components of the youth program in the local area. In accordance with § 129(c)(1), the design framework of the local youth program must include:
  - a. An objective assessment of each youth registrant;
  - b. Development of an individual service strategy for each youth registrant; and
  - c. Preparation for post-secondary educational opportunities linkages between academic and occupational learning, preparation for employment, and effective connections to intermediary organizations that provide strong links to the job market and employers.

#### **Response:**

The services which will be available to youth after a thorough objective assessment has been done have been listed above. Staff, along with partnering agencies, will develop an individual service strategy after identifying the need(s) for each youth registrant and determining the appropriate blend of services. Proper referrals will then be made.

The youth system in our local area may integrate the elements into the required components as follows:

- 1) Preparation for post-secondary educational opportunities
  - a) tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to secondary school completion, including dropout prevention strategies;
  - b) paid and unpaid work experiences, including internships and job shadowing;
  - c) occupational skill training;

- d) leadership development opportunities, which may include such activities as positive social behavior and soft skills, decision making, team work, and other activities;
  - e) supportive services;
  - f) adult mentoring for a duration of at least twelve (12) months, that may occur both during and after program participation;
  - g) follow-up services; and
  - h) comprehensive guidance and counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse counseling, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate to the needs of the individual youth
- 2) Strong linkages between academic and occupational learning
- a) tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to secondary school completion, including dropout prevention strategies;
  - b) alternative secondary school offerings;
  - c) summer employment opportunities directly linked to academic and occupational learning;
  - d) paid and unpaid work experiences, including internships and job shadowing;
  - e) occupational skill training;
  - f) leadership development opportunities, which may include such activities as positive social behavior and soft skills, decision making, team work, and other activities;
  - g) supportive services;
  - h) adult mentoring for a duration of at least twelve (12) months, that may occur both during and after program participation;
  - i) follow-up services; and
  - j) comprehensive guidance and counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse counseling, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate to the needs of the individual youth
- 3) Preparation for unsubsidized employment opportunities
- a) summer employment opportunities directly linked to academic and occupational learning;
  - b) paid and unpaid work experiences, including internships and job shadowing;
  - c) occupational skill training;
  - d) leadership development opportunities, which may include such activities as positive social behavior and soft skills, decision making, team work, and other activities;
  - e) supportive services;
  - f) adult mentoring for a duration of at least twelve (12) months, that may occur both during and after program participation;
  - g) follow-up services; and

- h) comprehensive guidance and counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse counseling, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate to the needs of the individual youth
- 4) Effective linkages with intermediaries with strong employer connections
- a) summer employment opportunities directly linked to academic and occupational learning;
  - b) paid and unpaid work experiences, including internships and job shadowing;
  - c) occupational skill training;
  - d) leadership development opportunities, which may include such activities as positive social behavior and soft skills, decision making, team work, and other activities;
  - e) supportive services;
  - f) adult mentoring for a duration of at least twelve (12) months, that may occur both during and after program participation;
  - g) follow-up services; and
  - h) comprehensive guidance and counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse counseling, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate to the needs of the individual youth
2. Provide a description of how the youth program elements required by §664.410 of the interim final regulations will be provided within that framework. Those required elements are:
- a. Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to secondary school completion, including dropout prevention strategies;
  - b. Alternative secondary school offerings;
  - c. Summer employment opportunities directly linked to academic and occupational learning;
  - d. Paid and unpaid work experiences, including internships and job shadowing;
  - e. Occupational skill training;
  - f. Leadership development opportunities, which may include such activities as positive social behavior and soft skills, decision making, team work, and other activities;
  - g. Supportive services;
  - h. Adult mentoring for a duration of at least twelve (12) months, that may occur both during and after program participation;
  - i. Follow-up services; and
  - j. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse counseling, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate to the needs of the individual youth.

**Response:**

Specifically, the list below identifies who could/should provide each of the 10 elements and also serve as a first source of funding in LWA 12:

- a) Tutoring, study skills, instruction leading to secondary school completion, including dropout prevention strategies
  - 1) high school programs offer tutoring programs **and credit recovery projects.**
  - 2) BEST, Inc. and Starved Rock Associates for Vocational and Technical Education worked with 2 high schools to offer Youth at Its BEST projects to at-risk students
  - 3) the local Housing Authority offers after school tutoring to its in-school residents
  - 4) community colleges through Adult Ed/GED programs
- b) Alternative secondary school offerings
  - 1) most area high schools have specific programs for behavioral disorder students
  - 2) alternative schools
- c) Summer employment opportunities directly linked to academic and occupational learning
  - 1) ~~in previous years BEST, Inc. has contracted with the Starved Rock Associates for Vocational and Technical Education to coordinate academic learning, life skills and career exploration activities as part of its summer youth program~~ **BEST, Inc. conducts leadership workshops during summer months for career exploration and work readiness as part of the summer program**
  - 2) BEST, Inc. works with area employers to create training outlines that link learned skills with the occupation.
  - 3) The NCI Works workNet Center and all satellites
  - 4) local businesses and chambers of commerce
- d) Paid and Unpaid work experiences, including internships and job shadowing
  - 1) BEST through private and public not-for-profit agencies as well as private for profits for internships and job shadowing
  - 2) STEP
  - 3) Tech-Prep
  - 4) Co-Ops in most schools
  - 5) The NCI Works workNet Center and all satellites
  - 6) Department of Human Services
  - 7) Education-to-Careers programs for eligible youth
  - 8) Local businesses and chambers of commerce
- e) Occupational skill training
  - 1) Same as #d
  - 2) community colleges, area vocational schools and proprietary schools
  - 3) on-site at local businesses
- f) Leadership development opportunities, which may include such activities as positive social behavior and soft skills, decision making, team work and other activities

- 1) BEST, Inc.
  - 2) IL Teen Institutes at some local high schools
  - 3) Project Snowball at some local high schools
  - 4) local Youth Service Bureau
  - 5) Scouting
  - 6) Camp Fire programs
  - 7) 4-H programs
  - 8) IL Violence Prevention Authority
  - 9) local Housing Authority
  - 10) U of I Extension Service
  - 11) North Central Behavioral Health Systems
  - 12) Parents Too Soon
  - 13) YMCA/YWCA
  - 14) Local area recreational programs
- g) Support Services
- 1) BEST , Inc
  - 2) local Housing Authorities
  - 3) Department of Human Services
  - 4) Tri-County Opportunities Council (Community Services Block Grant program)
  - 5) Child Care Connections
  - 6) Salvation Army
  - 7) Food Pantries
  - 8) local Clothes Closets
  - 9) Youth Service Bureau
  - 10) local agencies addressing drug, alcohol and mental health problems
- h) Adult Mentoring
- 1) BEST, Inc.
  - 2) local housing authorities
  - 3) local businesses through various community projects
  - 4) senior citizen agencies/associations
- i) Follow-Up Services
- 1) BEST, Inc.
  - 2) Local housing authorities
  - 3) Tri-County Opportunities
  - 4) Department of Human Services
  - 5) Child Care Connections
  - 6) IL Teen Institute
  - 7) Project Snowball
  - 8) Youth Service Bureau
  - 9) Scouting
  - 10) Camp Fire
  - 11) 4-H
  - 12) IL Violence Prevention Authority
  - 13) Local Alternatives to Domestic Violence
  - 14) Local Drug and Alcohol Counseling Agencies

- j) Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling
  - 1) BEST, Inc.
  - 2) North Central Behavioral Health System
  - 3) Sinissippi Centers, Inc.
  - 4) Out patient at area hospitals
  - 5) Private Practices
  - 6) Everything in #i above

~~In school and out of school youth who are interested in being selected for participation in the employment opportunity component with BEST, Inc. must first **may be invited to** complete a two-day orientation training session that covers a wide spectrum of topics. In addition to simply introducing the youth to the summer work program, the curriculum is designed to provide work readiness/preparation instruction (resumes, applications, career exploration, etc.), convey employer expectations in the workplace, and teach interpersonal skills that may be used on or off the job. In addition, and as part of their more active role in the hiring process, the employers will also be instrumental in the development of the training outline identifying the specific tasks the youth will be expected to do while on the job. These occupational skills along with the work readiness skills will be monitored closely by staff, and successful attainment of these will determine if performance standards are met. Successful completion of the orientation will be rewarded with a certificate and a stipend of \$30.00 per day of attendance.~~

In-school and out-of-school youth who are interested in being selected for participation in the BEST, Inc. Summer Youth program may be invited to participate in the Dale Broadway Leadership Conference (DBLC), a two day orientation training session that covers a wide spectrum of topics. In addition to simply introducing the youth to the summer work program, the curriculum is designed to provide work readiness/preparation instruction (resumes, applications, career exploration, etc.), convey employer expectations in the workplace, and teach interpersonal and life skills that may be used on or off the job. For the 2009 Summer Program, the work readiness component will be done through Illinois workNet. In addition, and as part of their more active role in the hiring process, the employers will also be instrumental in the developments of the training outline identifying the specific tasks the youth will be expected to do while on the job. These occupational skills along with the work readiness skills will be monitored by staff as outlined in Policy Letter 08-ARRA-01, Change 1. Furthermore, successful attainment of the Work Readiness performance standard will be determined according to the aforementioned policy letter. Successful completion of the DBLC orientation will be rewarded with a certificate and an incentive of \$30.00 per day for successful completion.

BEST, Inc. recognizes that this more intensive, long-term youth component is going to require a serious commitment from each and every youth who intends to participate. Equally important, however, is a complete “buy-in” by the parents; therefore, during the eligibility process case managers will meet with, **or at least communicate with**, the parents of each youth and convey the expectations and responsibilities that will be required as a participant in this enhanced summer component. Parents who agree to

accept all the stipulations and who are willing to actively support their child's/children's participation will be asked to sign a statement of support.

Once hired, the youth will work up to 30 hours per week and receive minimum wage. If an individual is under the age of 18, they will receive minimum wage for that age range. The intensive case management will continue and will identify and address any problems or issues that may come up on the job. Typically, the paid work experience will last for 6 to 10 weeks and may be conducted at either public or private work sites.

Basic skills training will be made available through referrals to those youth who have been determined basic skills deficient either during or after work hours depending upon the availability of the worksite. The length and intensity of the instruction will be customized to meet the needs of the youth, but in many cases will probably involve both long term intervention and referral to partnering agencies for GED, tutoring, and/or mentoring assistance.

The end of the **WIA-funded** summer program does not signal the end of our intervention with the youth. For in-school youth, the mobile case management will continue on site at area high schools, public facilities, or at the Illinois workNet Center. This intensive one-on-one interaction is intended to identify academic, personal and job related needs of the youth as s/he continues in school. Activities in leadership, career exploration and community service have been developed year round for continuous involvement with the participants. Each of the career exploration events and the leadership events may have stipends of \$30.00 awarded for successful completion. BEST, Inc. will submit an annual activities plan for review and approval by the youth council. Additional services may include referrals to programs in response to an individual's need.

Preparation for employment and linkages with academic and occupational learning will be continuously reinforced. The Individual Service Strategy will outline if there will be an actual work experience component and whether it will take place in the form of job shadowing, internships, or a paid or unpaid job during the school year. It will also identify if financial supportive services are needed and to what extent.

Recognizing the need for academic and occupational learning, students will be encouraged to take advantage of the spectrum of services available to prepare them for secondary completion and/or post-secondary educational opportunities. All appropriate resources and referrals will be accessed to ensure achievement of academic goals. At the end of the school year, appropriate employment will be secured and higher employment related expectations will be set for both the student and the employer.

Out-of-school youth who complete the summer program will be strongly encouraged to pursue either a GED or return to school and obtain a high school diploma if they have not yet completed secondary school, or to enroll in post-secondary instruction if they lack adequate occupational skills. Any and all resources and referrals will be utilized to accomplish this goal.

~~In addition, the ISS will identify appropriate employment opportunities, preferably in the private sector, that will meet the needs, interests and abilities of the individual. Again, BEST, Inc. has designed a program that will link these employment and learning components. The Customized Individual Training Program (C.I.T.P.) is intended to be available year-round, and partnering agencies will be asked to provide services such as paid work experience, “try out” employment, internships, job shadowing, vocational training, basic skills instruction, tutoring and/or any of the other youth program elements identified in the Act. All academic and employment activities will focus on the occupational choice of the youth, and the mobile case management will again provide the necessary support and guidance to assure successful completion and permanent employment.~~

~~As stated previously, the Youth Council in LWA 12 intends to identify gaps in available services and design a coordinated response to fill those gaps. A Request for Proposal (RFP) will be let out to seek an appropriate provider that can fully develop a program that will fill an identified gap in services to youth in LWA 12. At this time two contracts are in place for youth educational and work ready services throughout the local area. These contracts were secured through a Request for Proposal that was defined previously by the Youth Council and approved by the Workforce Board. Similarly, as other services may be identified to benefit the youth and meet their needs, providers and services will be secured through the RFP Process. This process is completed yearly as allocations allow.~~

As stated previously, a Request-for-Proposal (RFP) is let out to seek appropriate providers who can offer programs designed to fill an identified need in services to youth in LWA 12. At this time two contracts have been extended for GED and credit recovery programs, and two other have been approved and are currently going through negotiations. These projects were secured through a Request-for-Proposal that was defined previously by the Youth Council and approved by NCI Works. Similarly, as other services may be identified to benefit the youth and meet their needs, providers and services will be secured through the RFP Process. This process is completed minimally on a yearly basis as allocations allow and need arises.

~~On a similar note, the Council recognized that there is no one service provider that has a comprehensive leadership development program to offer WIA eligible youth in LWA 12. It did acknowledge, however, that there are available activities scattered among various youth-oriented agencies and expressed its desire to see these services “packaged” and incorporated into the overall local youth system.~~

~~First of all, local agencies and institutions would be advised that funding for WIA-eligible youth could be made available to enable them to take advantage of already-existing leadership development activities or events. This offering could be targeted to older and/or out-of-school youth who will derive benefit from such participation.~~

~~On a grander scale, Speakers will be brought in to present workshops on the importance of team work, improving self-confidence and self-esteem, developing positive social~~

~~skills, exposure to “real life” situations and various other topics that will address all aspects of leadership in life and at work.~~

Each year at the beginning of the summer program, the Dale Broadway Leadership Conference is held. Summer youth participants are invited to attend the two-day event which offers workshops on work readiness training, self-development/improvement, life skills, team work and career exploration. This year the work readiness component was offered through Illinois workNet as part of a statewide initiative.

Recognizing that many of the youth who will access the services available in LWA 12 will have multiple barriers to success, the Youth Council believes it will be very important to offer them continuous encouragement and recognition of achievements, both large and small. Therefore, it recommended the following incentive policies, which were approved by NCI Works:

- \$10.00 for each ½ grade level increase in Basic Skills in areas pre-tested below 9<sup>th</sup> grade. This incentive is capped at \$100 per year.
- \$100.00 for attaining Basic Skills Competency at 9.0 in areas that were deficient. (Deficient is any math or reading level 8.9 or below)
- \$150.00 for receiving a High School diploma.
- \$100.00 for obtaining a GED certificate.

Youth must be enrolled in the program for at least 60 days before they are eligible to earn an incentive. The Youth Council annually approves incentive payments for Career Exploration events including the Dale Broadway Leadership Conference.

As alluded to throughout this section, partner support and cooperation is vital to the success of a comprehensive, integrated system in our area. Each agency identified in the menu is recognized because of its expertise in its field. The combined efforts of all these agencies along with their willingness to accept responsibility for providing their services to youth served under WIA will determine the degree of success in LWA 12.

3. Provide a description of the means by which successful providers of these youth activities will be identified by the local board (or by the youth council if given that responsibility by the local board), in accordance with §118(b)(6).

**Response:**

Criteria to be used in identifying effective or ineffective providers will include:

- 1) Degree of attainment of established performance goals/measures,
- 2) Customer satisfaction results,
- 3) Compliance with contractual provisions, and
- 4) Level of cooperation between the provider and all other agencies.

Information and data obtained through this process will be presented to the NCI Works and/or Youth Council for awarding new contracts or continuing/extending existing

contracts. Both the project and the provider will be evaluated for recommendation of funding/not funding in the future.

4. Provide a description of the mechanisms for coordinating the youth program with:
  - a. Foster care programs;
  - b. Education;
  - c. Public assistance programs; and,
  - d. Other youth programs.

**Response:**

One form of coordination will be the potential referral of mutual customers since each of the programs listed above has a direct link to the Title I targeted youth population:

- a. Foster care youth are automatically eligible under WIA
- b. Education and education-to-careers programs offer training opportunities in addition to preparation for entry in the workforce
- c. Many Job Corps youth participants would likely be economically disadvantaged, and Job Corps programs would offer Title I youth alternatives to current life styles.
- d. Although not available in LWA 12, Youth Opportunity Grants offer additional training opportunities that will only enhance those available under WIA.

Another form of coordination will be the exchange of information on mutual customers between agencies and programs. There has been a long history of information sharing in this area dating back to the 1970s under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) when the CETA prime sponsor staff met regularly with staff of the Employment Service and the Department of Public Aid, and as needed with staff of the local Department of Children and Family Services, to discuss case loads and placement information. This relationship continued under the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) and in fact expanded to education and education-to-careers programs with the Executive Director of the Business Employment Skills Team, Inc. (BEST, Inc.), serving on the Adult Education Council and the local ETC Council. **Even today, the Executive Director and the Program Coordinator of BEST, Inc. serve on the IVCC Adult Planning Council.** Similarly, ~~it is expected that~~ representatives from all of ~~the~~ **these** agencies/programs will have a seat on ~~the local Workforce Investment Board~~ **NCI Works** and/or the local Youth Council.

As a true testimonial of coordination in LWA 12, stakeholders and partnering agencies are going beyond the bounds of simply exchanging information and referrals. ~~Recent~~ **Past** reports and studies indicate that a number of families in LWA 12 are affected by poverty, or at least low income levels. Recognizing that individuals living under these conditions oftentimes experience difficulties in an educational, cultural, social and employment environment, a coalition of agencies, schools, business, labor and other interested persons began meeting to address this issue through a holistic approach.

Starting with a day-long workshop on “A Framework for Understanding Poverty” presented by Rita Pierson of the *aha!* Process, Inc., key points to remember about individuals living in poverty were shared with the audience.

From there a series of workshops was held simultaneously, but at different locations. Two of the workshops involved teachers and other school personnel, and one involved agency-staff and other interested parties. The idea behind this next step was to build upon the first workshop, and begin developing community-wide strategies and support for addressing the issue. All agreed that no one element of society can single-handedly battle poverty effectively, but perhaps a united approach might at least be more successful in reversing some of the harm it causes. ~~Additional workshops are planned for the remainder of this year.~~ **The Youth Council continues to carry out both the intent and the spirit of this effort through its initiatives and projects.**

~~To~~ **As a** complement **to that** effort as well as other efforts occurring in the NCI Works area, ~~an~~ **the Education** action team was formed as a result of the Community Audit **conducted in 2003 to deal** ~~deals~~ specifically with education issues. Again, representatives of agencies, schools, businesses, labor and other community establishments ~~have~~ identified some important goals they believed ~~will~~ **would** contribute to the area’s competitiveness by growing a qualified, well-prepared workforce. Among the projects they ~~will be working~~ **worked on** ~~are~~ **were** exploring the idea of a shared vocational guidance counselor that will serve as a liaison between schools and businesses; establishing a speakers bureau of local business to talk to youth about education and skills needed for local occupations; and, assisting in the development of a work ethic certificate program for all job seekers. **The Action Team was intended to be a short term initiative, perhaps 1 – 2 years, but in fact only disbanded in April of 2009 after successfully launching many of the goals they originally set for themselves. Initiatives that are on-going have been referred to the Youth Council for continued oversight and implementation.**

IV. Performance Management: In this section describe how you intend to measure the success of your strategies in achieving your goals and serving customers, as well as how you intend to use these data to continuously improve the local workforce investment system.

~~A. Negotiated Performance Goals~~

~~1. Provide the negotiated performance goals for each of the following core indicators for Program Years 2007 through 2008 on the form provided:~~

~~Program Year 2007~~

~~e. Youth, ages 19 to 21~~

~~i. Entered employment rate;~~

~~ii. Six month retention rate~~

- iii. ~~Average earnings change in six months~~
- iv. ~~Credential attainment rate (training services only)~~

d. ~~Youth, ages 14 to 18~~

- 
- I. ~~Skill attainment rate;~~
  - ii. ~~Diplomas or equivalent attainment rate;~~
  - iii. ~~Retention rate.~~

Program Year 2008

a. ~~Youth~~

- I. ~~Youth Placement in Employment or Education Rate~~
- ii. ~~Youth Attainment of a Degree or Certificate Rate~~
- iii. ~~Youth Literacy and Numeracy Gains Rate~~

**Response:** ~~The youth performance goals worksheets are included with this youth plan under Attachment A.~~

A. ~~Other Performance Measures~~

- 1. ~~Provide a description of any locally developed (i.e., by the LWIB) youth performance measures.~~

**Program Year 2008**

a. **Adults**

- i. **Entered employment rate;**
- ii. **Six month retention rate; or**
- iii. **Adult Average Earnings**

b. **Dislocated Workers**

- i. **Entered employment rate;**
- ii. **Six month retention rate; or**
- iii. **Dislocated Workers Average Earnings**

b. **Youth**

- i. **Youth Placement in Employment or Education Rate;**
- ii. **Youth Attainment of a Degree or Certificate Rate; or**

iii. Youth Literacy and Numeracy Gains Rate.

V. Assurances

- A. The local board assures that it will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities.
- B. The local board assures that no funds received under the Workforce Investment Act will be used to assist, promote or deter union organizing.
- C. The local board assures that it will comply with the nondiscrimination provisions of Section 188.

VI. Plan Development Process: In this section describe the processes by which widespread local input was received during the development of the plan.

- A. Describe the process for developing the youth portion of the local workforce investment plan. Include a description of the chief elected official's and the local board's involvement in drafting, reviewing and commenting on the Plan. What actions were taken to collaborate in the development of the local plan with other local elected officials, the business community, labor organizations, educators, vocational rehabilitation agencies, and other interested parties such as service providers, welfare agencies, community-based organizations, transportation providers and advocates?

**Response:**

~~The modifications of the youth, adult and dislocated worker plans for LWA-12 were submitted to the Planning and Organizational Resources Committee acting on behalf of NCI Works at their meeting on April 22, 2008. Their action will be ratified at the next NCI works meeting. Plans will then go to the Chief Elected Officials for the approval at their April meeting.~~

~~A legal notice notifying the public of the Plans' availability for review was placed in the local newspapers on April 24, 2008. Also, the North Central IL Works Youth Council routinely provides input and comments in the planning process. The Youth Council is comprised of members representing the business community, labor, educators, vocational rehab agencies, youth based Community Based Organizations, representative from Juvenile Probation, parents of eligible youth, and a former youth participant. Therefore, this plan was developed as a result of a very collaborative process.~~

This modification of the youth, adult and dislocated worker plan for LWA 12 was presented to and approved by the Planning/Organizational Resources Committee acting on behalf of NCI Works at their meeting on June 17, 2009. Their action will be ratified at the July NCI Works meeting. Representatives of the business community, labor, education, vocational rehabilitation agencies, welfare agencies and community-based organizations serve on the local workforce investment board and were asked to provide input and comments on the plan as presented. The modification was presented to the Chief Elected Officials at their June 15, 2009 meeting. At that time they unanimously voted to allow the BEST, Inc. Executive Director to act on their behalf at the Planning/Organizational Resources Committee Meeting in order to get the modification submitted by the June 30, 2009 due date. This action will be ratified by the CEOs at their August 2009 meeting, and any revisions, additions, etc. will be addressed at that time. This modification to the NCI Works 5-year plan is being submitted with the expressed understanding that the document is a work in progress and that future meetings will focus on more thoroughly analyzing the workforce development system in LWA 12.

B. Describe the mechanisms which were used to make copies of the proposed youth plan available to the public for comment prior to submission.

**Response:**

~~A legal notice was placed in all major newspapers throughout LWA 12 following policy procedure. This legal notice informed the general public and any interested parties that the proposed youth plan would be available for comment in the BEST, Inc. administrative office.~~

A legal notice was placed in all major newspapers throughout LWA 12 following policy procedures. This legal notice informed the general public and any interested parties that the modified Youth, Adult and Dislocated Worker Plan would be available for comment in the BEST, Inc. administrative office and the Dislocated Worker Center office at Illinois Valley Community College.

C. Describe the measures taken to allow formal comment on the local plan from members of the public, and from representatives of business and labor organizations.

**Response:**

~~The proposed youth plan and the adult and dislocated worker plan were presented to the local workforce investment board at a special meeting and a legal notice was placed in the newspapers as previously described. Members of the general public, and representatives from the business community and labor organizations were notified of the opportunity for input and comments through these mechanisms.~~

As previously mentioned, the proposed youth plan and the adult and dislocated worker plan was presented to and approved by the Planning/Organizational Resources Committee acting on

behalf of NCI Works at their meeting on June 17, 2009. Their action will be ratified at the July NCI Works meeting. A legal notice was placed in the newspapers on June 18, 2009. Members of the general public, and representatives from the business community and labor organizations were notified of the opportunity for input and comments through these mechanisms.

D. Include with the submission of the plan any comments that represent a disagreement with the plan.

No comments were received.

VII. Budgets and Registrants: In this section provide quarterly budgets and planned registration levels for the first year of the five-year plan, and annual estimated budgets and registrations for the remaining four years. While these budgets are for WIA Title I funded programs only, they should be developed within the context of all the sources of funds available in the local area. Each are included as Attachment A to this letter.

A. WIA Youth Program Funding and Administration Budgeted Costs

B. WIA Youth Program Budgeted Costs

1. Quarterly budget for first year for youth programs
2. Annual budget for key youth services

C. WIA Youth Program Cumulative Registrants

1. Quarterly registrants for first year for youth programs
2. Annual registrants for key youth services

D. WIA Five-Year Local Plan Budgets and Registrants

1. Annual budgeted funds for youth programs
2. Annual planned registrants for youth programs.

Response: All forms are included under Attachment B.

# **Appendix A (Budget & Participant Information)**

# Performance Goals

# **Evidence of Publication**