

**Workforce Innovation and  
Opportunity Act Local Plan  
July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2028**

**Local Workforce Development Area**

Catawba

**Counties within the Local Workforce Development Area**

Chester, Lancaster, York

**Local Workforce Development Area Administrator and Contact Information**

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## Attachment B: Local Plan Requirements

The local plan serves as a four-year action plan to develop, align, and integrate local workforce development area (LWDA) service delivery strategies with those that support the state's strategic and operational goals. In partnership with the chief elected officials (CEOs), each local workforce development board (LWDB) must develop and submit a local plan to identify and describe the policies, procedures, and activities that are carried out in the LWDA, consistent with the strategic vision and goals outlined in the WIOA State Plan and the respective regional plan.

In alignment with South Carolina's Unified State Plan (resulting from South Carolina's Act 67 of 2023), the Program Years (PYs) 2024 – 2027 WIOA State Plan vision is to achieve and sustain South Carolina's workforce potential. The plan focuses on the following priorities:

1. Develop and create an effective customer-driven workforce system through the alignment of programs and policies, the use of leading-edge technology, and high-quality staff.
2. Prepare jobseekers for priority occupations through relevant training and skills acquisition, and match jobseekers to open employer positions.
3. Improve the education and workforce infrastructure network to decrease obstacles to work in order to improve recruitment and retention of workers, which is necessary to maintain economic development competitiveness.
4. Create alignment between the workforce development system and the South Carolina agencies and organizations directing implementation of the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act of 2021 (IIJA), Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (IRA), and CHIPS and Science Act of 2022 funding.

The following guiding principles must be considered priorities and included in responses throughout the LWDA's PYs 2024 – 2027 Local Plan:

- Partnership and collaboration,
- Increased access to resources and services through the use of technology, and
- Innovation and cost efficiencies.

The local plan must include:

Section I:	Workforce and Economic Analysis
Section II:	Strategic Vision and Goals
Section III:	Local Partnerships and Investment Strategies
Section IV:	Program Design and Evaluation
Section V:	Operations and Compliance

## **Section I: Workforce and Economic Analysis**

**An analysis of regional labor market data and economic conditions, to include existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations, and the employment needs of employers in those existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations. The analysis must include the following:**

- **The knowledge and skills necessary to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including those in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.**
- **An analysis of the current workforce in the region, including employment and unemployment data, labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment; and**
- **An analysis of workforce development activities in the region, including available education and training opportunities. This analysis must indicate the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities necessary to address the education and skill needs of job seekers, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers in the region.**

The mission of the Catawba Workforce Development Board (WDB) is:

*The Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) is dedicated to fostering robust partnerships among local leaders, businesses, and community organizations to strengthen the workforce system. We are committed to developing and implementing innovative strategies, policies, and programs that align employment, training, and education efforts to promote economic growth and prosperity within our community. Through collaborative leadership and a focus on continuous improvement, we aim to empower individuals and businesses to succeed in a dynamic and evolving economy.*

Our mission can only be realized if we have data to understand the regional labor market and the economic conditions within the Catawba area. The WDB's Strategic Planning Committee reviews and analyzes information at least annually to study in-demand emerging and existing industries and occupations. The Committee recommends the in-demand industry sectors Catawba should focus on to the WDB for approval.

Additional state and local labor market data is provided to the WDB and Committees when discussions and actions benefit from the information. Data we routinely review include Catawba Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS); DEW LMI (Industry Projections Employment 10 yr., Catawba Area Profile, Community Profiles, etc.); I-77 Alliance Data – Northern Commuter Shed (Employment by Industry, Labor Market Projections, Average Annual Wage by Industry, Average Monthly Wage by Industry; and South Carolina Data TRENDS.

The Catawba Workforce Development Board reviewed the region's top 5 industry clusters for allowable training in this planning period. Based on the analysis of these reviews and our knowledge of new employers locating to our area, our current in-demand industries, and educational requirements are Healthcare, Maintenance/Manufacturing,

Transportation/Logistics, Building/Construction, and Office/Computer Technology. Retail, Accommodations, and Food Services employ large numbers; however, these are typically low wage jobs that do not require specific certifications. The Catawba Local Area will utilize Retail, Accommodations, and Food Services as entry level positions for individuals with multiple barriers to provide essential skills and job readiness preparation for the purpose of then moving individuals to career paths in the demand industries and occupations.

As a member of the WIOA Central Region, we have implemented some of the same strategies used to determine target industries for the WIOA Central Region and those industries are very similar to the Catawba Workforce Development area. We have chosen to concentrate on Advanced Manufacturing first and then move on to other in-demand industries. We will continue to use these tools and other relevant information to provide the best workforce possible in the Catawba Area. The Catawba Workforce Development Area's geography is also a part of the I-77 Alliance footprint which includes all three of our counties.

As another method of meeting the employment needs in our area, we gather information from employers through many different avenues about their specific needs to include employers on our Catawba Workforce Development Board and Committees. Our Business Solutions Team also communicates with employers by phone, email, videoconferences, visits and surveys. We work very closely with local Economic Development staff, Chamber of Commerce staff, and other great partners that share employer needs. Sector Partnership Groups will inform us related to employer needs and expectations and career pathway options.

Given the feedback provided from the region's economic development partners and stakeholders, the biggest need for dislocated workers continues to be On the Job Training (OJT). These workers already have a work history and experience but may need to upgrade current skills and learn new skills to become more marketable in the current job market. OJT is a big focus for the Catawba Area for PY24-25. Some dislocated workers do want to pursue a career change and may need Occupational Skills Training to obtain that goal. Those from the hospitality industries interested in jobs in a different sector may need Occupational Skills Training (OST) to become employed at a self-sustaining wage. They could also receive help from Transitional Employment (TE) to gain valuable work experience and improve their work history and resumes. Supportive services such as childcare reimbursement, expungement, driving school/driver's license assistance, internet access reimbursement, and travel reimbursement will be provided, as necessary, once need has been established. Access to broadband and transit are services that are critical to support individual reemployment needs and are not available in all parts of our area.

Employers continue to stress that they are looking for employees with good soft skills or essential skills. The need for these skills has been a statewide concern as referenced in the South Carolina Job Skills Gap Update. While we have been addressing this need with workshops for years, we have a specialized and dedicated soft skills curriculum in the Catawba area. As an answer to a request from our Strategic Planning Committee and Catawba Workforce Development Board, the WIOA Title I Service Provider Staff developed a 12-hour, highly interactive soft skills course –Job Endurance Training (JET). It was first piloted in 2018 to local

HR and economic development professionals and received great reviews. Now the program is offered area wide to job seekers in our SC Works Centers. It is also offered through partnerships with other agencies and organizations. Although it was created as an in-person course, it was adapted to be delivered virtually. That method was not as successful as in-person so it is back to in-person delivery now. The JET program received a National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Innovation Award in 2019.

Employers also stress that they need employees that are “trainable” for their jobs. This includes employees with basic reading and math skills for entry-level jobs, especially in manufacturing. We use Worldwide Interactive Network (WIN) assessments to determine job seeker skills because it is a “work-focused” standardized test. All WIOA participants take WIN, which consists of Applied Math, Locating Information, and Reading for Information.

Equus Workforce Solutions has transitioned from LinkedIn Learning to Metrix as their virtual learning platform. Metrix is a leading provider of workforce-focused virtual learning solutions, currently serving 130 Workforce Boards and government-funded partners across 20 states, reaching over 700,000 learners. With a catalog of more than 7,000 courses, Metrix offers tailored content designed specifically to meet the needs of the workforce industry, providing valuable resources for both our team members and job seekers/participants.

In the first quarter 2024, as seen in the following chart, Manufacturing and Healthcare continue to employ large numbers in the Catawba Local Area with good wages.

<b>Catawba Quarterly Census of Employment &amp; Wages</b>					
<b>Time Period</b>	<b>Industry</b>	<b>Industry Code</b>	<b>Establishments</b>	<b>Average Employment</b>	<b>Average Weekly Wage</b>
Q1 2024	Total, All Industries	00	11,569	141,233	\$1,222.00
Q1 2024	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	11	71	509	\$839.00
Q1 2024	Utilities	22	62	1,540	\$2,411.00
Q1 2024	Construction	23	947	6,362	\$1,476.00
Q1 2024	Manufacturing	31-33	681	16,884	\$1,473.00
Q1 2024	Wholesale Trade	42	635	6,722	\$1,835.00
Q1 2024	Retail Trade	44-45	1,238	17,446	\$750.00
Q1 2024	Transportation and Warehousing	48-49	345	6,176	\$1,154.00
Q1 2024	Information	51	369	2,453	\$2,209.00
Q1 2024	Finance and Insurance	52	685	4,498	\$2,572.00
Q1 2024	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	53	549	2,411	\$1,568.00
Q1 2024	Professional and Technical Services	54	1,889	7,411	\$1,846.00
Q1 2024	Management of Companies and Enterprises	55	109	4,261	\$2,821.00
Q1 2024	Administrative and Waste Services	56	761	6,642	\$910.00
Q1 2024	Educational Services	61	230	13,428	\$971.00
Q1 2024	Health Care and Social Assistance	62	1,067	16,457	\$1,057.00
Q1 2024	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	71	169	2,862	\$413.00
Q1 2024	Accommodation and Food Services	72	807	14,055	\$421.00
Q1 2024	Other Services, Except Public Administration	81	825	3,938	\$836.00
Q1 2024	Public Administration	92	109	6,358	\$1,029.00
Q1 2024	Unclassified	99	2	17	\$1,197.00

Source: SC Dept of Employment and Workforce QCEW data

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Demand openings, as shown below, correspond to turnover rates or exits.

		<b>Catawba Demand, Exits, Transfers</b>		
		<b>Projected 1-year</b>		
<b>NAICS</b>	<b>Industry</b>	<b>Total Demand</b>	<b>Exits</b>	<b>Transfers</b>
72	Accommodation and Food Services	2,833	1,171	1,427
44	Retail Trade	2,809	1,144	1,433
31	Manufacturing	1,968	703	1,054
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	2,103	816	879
61	Educational Services	1,361	600	622
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	1,165	435	576
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	967	365	471
48	Transportation and Warehousing	905	329	425
23	Construction	853	293	430
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	886	281	412
42	Wholesale Trade	777	277	413
92	Public Administration	683	257	326
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	586	218	297
52	Finance and Insurance	539	184	254
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	479	151	219
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	319	129	141
51	Information	309	99	151
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	171	76	80
22	Utilities	139	50	73
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	78	24	38
99	Unclassified	0	0	0
	<b>Total - All Industries</b>	<b>19,669</b>	<b>7,522</b>	<b>9,531</b>
<i>Source: JobSEQ Industry Snapshot report</i>				

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According to the following chart, Registered Nurses continue to show the biggest need in the Catawba Local Area. This could be due to the impact the pandemic had on the occupation and the general nursing shortage across the country. Retail jobs follow as the next sector with the most job openings. This may be due to the turnover rate and low wages.

### Catawba Top 20 Occupational Openings: Last 90 Days

SOC	Occupation Title	Number of Postings	Entry-Level Education Required
29-1141.00	Registered Nurses	1,086	Bachelor's degree
41-1011.00	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	618	High school diploma or equivalent
41-2031.00	Retail Salespersons	594	None
49-9071.00	Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	419	High school diploma or equivalent
53-3032.00	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	404	Postsecondary non-degree award
35-1012.00	First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	402	High school diploma or equivalent
41-3091.00	Sales Representatives of Services, Except Advertising, Insurance, Financial Services, and Travel	384	High school diploma or equivalent
11-9111.00	Medical and Health Services Managers	375	Bachelor's degree
35-3023.00	Fast Food and Counter Workers	351	None
41-3031.00	Securities, Commodities, and Financial Services Sales Agents	331	Bachelor's degree
53-7065.00	Stockers and Order Fillers	295	High school diploma or equivalent
29-1123.00	Physical Therapists	248	Doctoral or professional degree
37-2011.00	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	236	None
21-1093.00	Social and Human Service Assistants	230	High school diploma or equivalent
13-1071.00	Human Resources Specialists	220	Bachelor's degree
43-4051.00	Customer Service Representatives	212	High school diploma or equivalent
15-1252.00	Software Developers	199	Bachelor's degree
13-1199.00	Business Operations Specialists, All Other	195	Bachelor's degree
53-7062.00	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	193	None
29-2061.00	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	177	Postsecondary non-degree award
<i>Source: JobsEQ RTI data, 8/3/24 to 11/3/24</i>			

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The demand for truck drivers continues. We also continue to see an increase in demand based on employer surveys and communications for manufacturing, logistics, heavy equipment operators, and various certifications in the healthcare industry.

- **An analysis of the current workforce in the region, including employment and unemployment data, labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment:**

The Catawba Local Area has experienced a range of unemployment rates between September 2023 at 2.8% through 2025 at a preliminary figure of 4.5%. Since the 3.0% in April of 2024 the rate has risen until some lowering in September 2024. Please note that the labor force has increased along with the unemployment rates. The increases in unemployment rates challenges the Catawba Local Area to increase its awareness campaigns and communicate with jobseekers regarding job openings.

## Catawba Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Time Period	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate	Preliminary
September 2024	215,924	206,175	9,749	4.5%	Yes
August 2024	217,536	205,927	11,609	5.3%	No
July 2024	218,685	208,097	10,588	4.8%	No
June 2024	218,181	208,352	9,829	4.5%	No
May 2024	213,675	206,028	7,647	3.6%	No
April 2024	213,120	206,822	6,298	3.0%	No
March 2024	213,437	205,969	7,468	3.5%	No
February 2024	211,061	203,361	7,700	3.6%	No
January 2024	210,218	203,041	7,177	3.4%	No
December 2023	210,379	203,893	6,486	3.1%	No
November 2023	211,496	205,233	6,263	3.0%	No
October 2023	211,783	205,221	6,562	3.1%	No
September 2023	211,176	205,351	5,825	2.8%	No

Source: SC Dept of Employment and Workforce LAUS data

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The following chart (Source: ACS 5-Year Estimate, 2022 data) shows the educational attainment of those 25 and older in the Catawba Local Area. It is notable that Chester County has nearly 15% without a high school credential, nearly 11% in Lancaster County, and 7.7% in York County. Chester County has twice as many without a high school credential percentagewise showing the diverse challenges across the Catawba Local Area. As job openings point out, many employers no longer require a high school credential for employment. The Catawba Local Area will guide and inform individuals regarding in-demand industries and occupations that have a strong career path and long-term employment potential.

### Chester County Educational Attainment Level Total, Male, and Female

	Total	Percent	Total Male	Percent Male	Total Female	Percent Female
<b>Population 25 years and over</b>	22,441	(X)	10,632	(X)	11,809	(X)
Less than 9th grade	799	3.6%	450	4.2%	349	3.0%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	2,525	11.3%	1,300	12.2%	1,225	10.4%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	9,282	41.4%	4,649	43.7%	4,633	39.2%
Some college, no degree	4,545	20.3%	1,888	17.8%	2,657	22.5%
Associate's degree	2,181	9.7%	868	8.2%	1,313	11.1%
Bachelor's degree	1,948	8.7%	1,024	9.6%	924	7.8%
Graduate or professional degree	1,161	5.2%	453	4.3%	708	6.0%
High school graduate or higher	19,117	85.2%	8,882	83.5%	10,235	86.7%
Bachelor's degree or higher	3,109	13.9%	1,477	13.9%	1,632	13.8%

Source: ACS 5-Year estimates, 2022 data



### Lancaster County Educational Attainment Level Total, Male, and Female

	Total	Percent	Total Male	Percent Male	Total Female	Percent Female
<b>Population 25 years and over</b>	70,340	(X)	33,871	(X)	36,469	(X)
Less than 9th grade	2,642	3.8%	1,361	4.0%	1,281	3.5%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	5,056	7.2%	2,234	6.6%	2,822	7.7%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	19,859	28.2%	10,158	30.0%	9,701	26.6%
Some college, no degree	13,848	19.7%	6,482	19.1%	7,366	20.2%
Associate's degree	7,779	11.1%	3,425	10.1%	4,354	11.9%
Bachelor's degree	13,656	19.4%	6,799	20.1%	6,857	18.8%
Graduate or professional degree	7,500	10.7%	3,412	10.1%	4,088	11.2%
High school graduate or higher	62,642	89.1%	30,276	89.4%	32,366	88.7%
Bachelor's degree or higher	21,156	30.1%	10,211	30.1%	10,945	30.0%

Source: ACS 5-Year estimates, 2022 data

### York County Educational Attainment Level Total, Male, and Female

	Total	Percent	Total Male	Percent Male	Total Female	Percent Female
<b>Population 25 years and over</b>	191,641	(X)	91,774	(X)	99,867	(X)
Less than 9th grade	4,714	2.5%	2,326	2.5%	2,388	2.4%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	10,100	5.3%	5,412	5.9%	4,688	4.7%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	45,976	24.0%	22,466	24.5%	23,510	23.5%
Some college, no degree	40,284	21.0%	19,442	21.2%	20,842	20.9%
Associate's degree	19,942	10.4%	8,066	8.8%	11,876	11.9%
Bachelor's degree	44,962	23.5%	22,300	24.3%	22,662	22.7%
Graduate or professional degree	25,663	13.4%	11,762	12.8%	13,901	13.9%
High school graduate or higher	176,827	92.3%	84,036	91.6%	92,791	92.9%
Bachelor's degree or higher	70,625	36.9%	34,062	37.1%	36,563	36.6%

Source: ACS 5-Year estimates, 2022 data

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The following charts show PY23 WIOA enrolled participants with barriers data. It is notable that the most prevalent barrier for Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth is “basic skills deficient”. Other significant barriers include justice-involved, single parent, and no high school diploma or GED. The barriers lead to a lack of essential soft skills required to enter the workforce, as confirmed by employer surveys.

The goal for all WIOA participants is to gain employment with a living wage. The Catawba area offers various workshops: Resume Tips, Interviewing Tips, The Virtual Interview, Networking, and Your Social Media Presence, all targeted to these populations. We also have a referral system in place with our mandated WIOA Partners which includes, but is not limited to, Adult Education in all Counties, DSS for both their TANF and SNAP programs, Alston Wilkes Society, Housing Authority Agencies in each county, SC DEW RESEA program, and SC Vocational Rehabilitation. We also have a referral process with other social services, housing and health

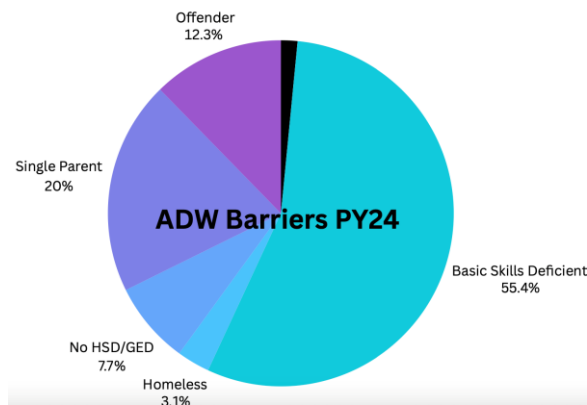
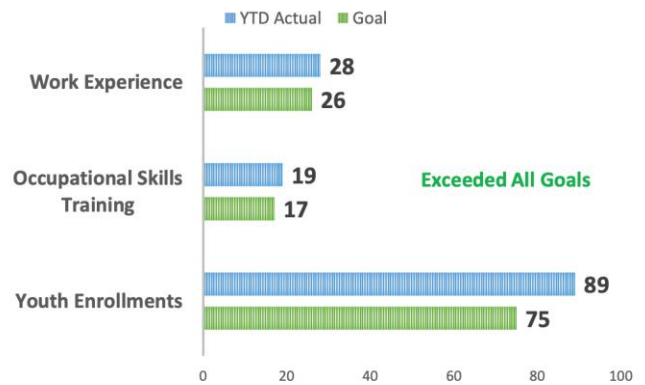
community partners such as Pathways, Pilgrims Inn, Women’s Enrichment Center, and CURES, just to name a few, to help meet the needs of these participants. WIOA can also offer supportive services for some needs that are not met by other sources. The Priority Populations Committee of the Catawba Workforce Development Board has provided many forums for employers to learn the many services offered by Vocational Rehabilitation for those with disabilities. Forums have been held at area VR facilities and featured speakers from VR, VR clients, and employers that hired VR clients, etc. That committee has also hosted a forum for employers to learn about services from WIOA, DEW, DSS, VR, etc. to help hire, retain, and reduce cost of training workers. Catawba received a Reentry Navigator Grant that provided a Reentry Navigator that specialized in services to help that specific population become employed. Although that grant has ended in 2022, we still continue those connections and services to that population.

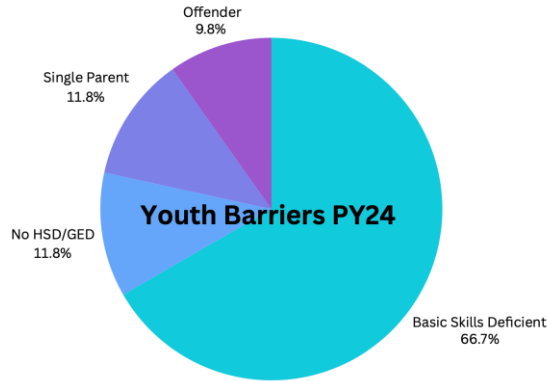
### PY23 Enrollment Information

**ADULT DW GOALS**



**YOUTH GOALS**





The pandemic showed, “37 percent of U.S. jobs can be performed entirely at home – a number that greatly exceeds any recent estimate of how many workers telecommute on an average day.” Telework continues to be very popular, although employers have begun requiring workers back in the office either part of the time or full time.

- **An analysis of workforce development activities in the region, including available education and training opportunities. This analysis must indicate the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities necessary to address the education and skill needs of job seekers, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers in the region:**

The Catawba Local Area has used several tools to analyze area training opportunities. In addition to those already mentioned, we use employer input (those serving on WDB committees, our Business Solutions Team, and Sector Partnership Groups), high school dropout data, WIOA participants entering/completing training data, etc. One weakness, as noted in the previous section, is that in our area, 7.7% of our Adults and Dislocated participants do not have a high school credential and 11.8% of youth lack a high school credential. To address this concern, we require all WIOA participants to obtain a GED or high school diploma prior to occupational training. We work closely with our area Adult Education partners to refer participants to their programs to complete their high school credential (diploma or GED). The following is a link to our Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) for the Catawba Area <https://scpath.org/Search/ProviderSearchLocalArea?localArea=7>

Although we do have several good options for training, we always welcome quality options for short-term credentials. We actively seek opportunities to collaborate with our current providers to develop new training programs. Additionally, we continuously explore credible new providers to expand options for our participants. Before being added to the Eligible Training Provider List, prospective providers undergo a thorough vetting process conducted by Workforce Development Board staff and the Board itself to ensure they deliver high-quality courses. Additional training providers for CDL, Healthcare, IT have been added in Program Year 2023. Some offer in- person classes and some are on-line. One of our strengths is that we continue to collaborate with training providers on more short-term training that results in an

industry recognized credential that aides our participants in obtaining employment. We are informed of employer needs and expectations related to certifications through the Business Solutions Team and the Sector Partnership Groups that trigger conversation and collaboration with Catawba Local Area educational institutions.

With many manufacturing and logistic jobs coming to our area, we continue to stress that these companies are hi-tech and provide a clean working environment, good wages and benefits. Most of these jobs are open to the vast majority of job seekers. WIOA staff members have been on tours of area companies to see the “new age” manufacturing environment.

Our analysis also continues to confirm the following weaknesses for job seekers with barriers to educational opportunities:

- The shift from in-person training to online models presented challenges for individuals lacking reliable internet access and those who learn best in a traditional classroom setting. The return of more in-person training options is now helping to attract job seekers back to training programs.
- The lack of access to a computer or only having access to a computer with an antiquated operating system. WIOA can help provide laptops and internet cost reimbursement to participants in approved training programs.
- Bandwidth issues for those rural job seekers with limited internet access.
- Lack of strong computer skills (referral to partners for upskilling).

Employers continue to have difficulty hiring enough workers. This is seen in nearly every sector. We continue to organize large, small, and single company hiring events to help area employers. As noted below for our most recent job fairs, even with lots of publicity (social media, radio, tv, etc.), the large events do not attract adequate numbers of job seekers for the employers. As noted in the chart below, jobseeker participation has declined in all but one event in 2024 from 2023.

DATE	COUNTY	LOCATION	EMPLOYERS	JOB SEEKERS
9/7/23	Chester	Gateway	47	184
9/20/23	Lancaster	USC Lancaster	20	143
10/4/23	York	York Technical College	30	154
10/24/23	Job Fair of the Carolinas at Carowinds		48	319
	5 counties (NC/SC)			
3/20/24	Lancaster	USC Lancaster	30	130
4/24/24	Chester	Gateway	35	135
8/22/24	York	Pathways	5	68
9/5/24	Chester	Gateway	27	211
9/19/24	York	York Technical College	20	112
10/9/24	Lancaster	Adult Education	18	65

The Catawba Local Area participated in a *Regional Job Fair of the Carolinas (North and South Carolina)*. 331 Job seekers attended/ 60+ Employers/over 2300 jobs available/812 follow-up interviews will be made by employers that participated/309 job offers occurred.

In PY22 over \$90,000 of WIOA Title I funds were invested back in to the community to assist local businesses with training costs. In a year's time these job seekers will generate over \$988,000 in wages that are then reinvested in our local community.

A major strength is the Catawba Local Area partnerships and collaboration with economic development and our educational institutions. Our analysis of the strengths and weakness of workforce development activities necessary to address the employment needs of businesses in our region has led to building a level of confidence in our ability to provide possible solutions to meet their hiring needs. We can provide a labor market analysis with the support of the Business Intelligence Department of SC DEW, conduct thorough assessments of business needs and offer cost saving programs such as On-the-Job Training, Transitional Employment for short-term needs, information on Federal Bonding, and the Work Opportunity Tax Credit. We also share a general analysis to show the potential impact to a company's bottom line due to turnover. These value-adds continue to foster and develop positive business connections and will allow us to prepare our job seekers for opportunities of which we may not otherwise be aware.

## **Section II: Strategic Vision and Goals**

**A description of the LWDB's strategic vision to support regional economic growth and self-sufficiency, including:**

- **Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment.**
- **A description of how the LWDB will work with core and required partners to align local resources to achieve the strategic vision and goals referenced above; and**
- **A description of how the LWDB will utilize technology to increase access to resources and services for job seekers and employers.**

The Catawba WDB's Vision is:

*"Collaborating to cultivate and sustain a workforce that is globally competitive, driving regional economic growth and enhancing quality of life".*

Our Guiding Principles support the Catawba WDB's Mission and Vision and drive our action steps identified to achieve the Board's Goals:

- Focus solely on activities that support the mission.
- Evaluate economic and labor market data, and actively listen to an inclusive group of partners, employers, and job seekers.
- Base strategies and decisions on data and input.

- Be accountable for outcomes that support business growth and economic opportunities for all South Carolinians.

The Catawba WDB Goals are aligned and support the State’s Priorities and Guiding Principles. Catawba EDB Goals are:

**GOAL #1.**

Support professional development for Workforce Staff and Catawba Workforce Development Board Members.

- This supports the State’s Goals through the understanding that information is power. The more staff and Board Members know about the services we provide, our customers, labor market information, business sectors, customer service, and overall workforce system intelligence the greater the opportunity to change the lives of the South Carolinians that need us.

**Strategies:**

- Hold a retreat annually to review the progress toward meeting the State and Local Goals, validate in-demand industries and occupations, review program designs and performance information, network with core and required partners, and analyze the impact the local workforce system has on the South Carolina economy in the communities we serve.  
A Retreat has been scheduled for January 2025 and is on the calendar.
- Support staff becoming National Association of Workforce Development Professional (NAWDP) Members and the achievement of each staff person becoming a Certified Workforce Development Professional (CWDP). NAWDP membership enhances each staff person’s network of peer professionals and provides free national training opportunities, discounts on conference attendance, ongoing promising/best practices nationwide, national policy change alerts, and updates on legislation, and partner activities. The CWDP is a national credential recognized by our Federal funding source that provides comprehensive training related to the workforce system. It is based on competencies created initially by USDOL and updated through partner engagement and task analysis.

**GOAL #2.**

Prepare jobseekers for 4H careers: **H**igh wage, **H**igh Growth, **H**igh Demand, and **H**igh Mobility.

- This supports the State’s Goals of developing and creating an effective customer-driven workforce system, preparing jobseekers for priority occupations, and matching jobseekers to open employer positions.

**Strategies:**

- Review and allocate funds for training investments in the five (5) top training clusters.

- Increase access to education and training necessary for individuals to use Broadband to advance their personal goals and increase South Carolina’s technology workforce competitiveness.
- The Catawba Workforce Development Board will improve strategic outreach and service delivery to employers to effectively match job seekers with employers.

GOAL #3.

Enhance the education and workforce infrastructure to reduce barriers to employment, thereby boosting recruitment and retention efforts. This is essential for maintaining economic competitiveness and supporting the growth of high-wage, high-demand jobs with opportunities for career advancement and retention.

Strategies:

- Increase awareness of resources to mitigate obstacles to employment.
- Implement a multifaceted rural outreach strategy to ensure that the rural area within the Catawba region have access to employment and training resources.

GOAL #4.

Create alignment between the workforce development system and the state agencies and organizations directing implementation of the IJJA, IRA, and CHIPS and Science Act funding.

Strategies:

- Identify resources and funding opportunities to provide services to job seekers.
- Communicate opportunities to the workforce system.
- Identify and strategically target training providers in the state that are offering programs in the infrastructure, energy, and advanced manufacturing sectors.

All core partners and many required partners are members of our WDB and committees and are key in the discussions and decisions that are made. Partner meetings are held quarterly. These meetings are typically hybrid to allow for greater attendance. The partner meetings provide opportunities to share best practices and learn about and discuss resources that each partner can provide. This discussion and follow-up enable the alignment of resources and eliminates duplication. A product of partner collaboration is a resource matrix for job seekers has been completed and distributed to partners in each county.

The Catawba Workforce Development Board’s Strategic Planning Committee consists of a powerful collaboration of partners ranging from education to business to economic development to community-based organizations. These core, required, and non-traditional partners provide strategic direction on aligning local resources to achieve the mission, vision, and goals.

The Catawba Workforce Development Board understands the dramatic changes that have occurred in just the last two years related to technology and artificial intelligence. The coming months and years will undoubtedly provide opportunities and challenges for the workforce

system to increase access to technology (AI-Artificial Intelligence) and resources that will prepare jobseekers to meet the ever-changing work environment. The WDB will work with partners to determine appropriate investments in technology to provide a more relevant customer experience. The WDB's sector partnership groups will provide insight from a business perspective of what needs to be included in training options for jobseekers and youth. The WDB's educational partners will be an important advisor on existing training and future training opportunities to address the needs identified by the business sector partnership groups. The WDB's staff and contractors will be encouraged to request permission to purchase technology related to virtual reality, augmented reality, and robotics to assist in enhancing the customer experience.

### **Section III: LWDA Partnerships and Investment Strategies**

**1) A description of the planning process undertaken to produce the local plan. The description must include how the CEOs, LWDB, and core and required partners were involved in the development of the plan.**

The Catawba Workforce Development Board has taken a proactive approach to creating a meaningful Local Plan. First the local planning process involved input for relevant sections of the plan from meetings and minutes from WDB, committees, employers, partners, economic development, Adult Ed, and service providers. The WDB's Strategic Planning Committee held an interactive strategic planning session to create an enhanced mission, vision, and goals. Strategies and action steps were created to guide the achievement of the goals.

When the State's guidance was released, the Catawba Strategic Planning Committee met with leadership to initiate the writing of a new plan for the period July 1, 2024, thru June 30, 2028.

The WDB Board, Committees, and Chief Elected Officials received a draft of the local plan and were provided an opportunity to question, add to, take from, and/or request change any of the contents. Input was given consideration by the Strategic Planning Committee. Following these reviews, the plan was posted on the SC Works Catawba website ([www.scworkscatawba.net](http://www.scworkscatawba.net)) and Catawba Regional Council of Governments ([www.catawbacog.org](http://www.catawbacog.org)). The plan availability was posted in a local area newspaper two times. Email blasts with the draft went to the WDB Members, economic development, adult education, and local elected officials.

**2) A description of the workforce development system in the LWDA, including the following:**

- **Identification of the programs that are included in the system; and**
- **How the LWDB will support strategies for service alignment among the entities**



The Catawba workforce system is comprised of a diverse range of many partners with a variety of programs and services. The partners include WIOA core partners, WIOA required partners, and non-traditional partners throughout our communities.

Adult Education: Chester, Lancaster, Rock Hill, and Tri-District	Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Programs
Alston Wilkes Society	Second Chance Program
Carolina Community Actions, LLC	Community Services Block Grant, Low Income Emergency Assistance Program, Employment and Training Activities
Catawba Indian Nation/SC Indian Development Council	Native American Programs
Department of Housing & Urban Development	Employment and Training Activities
Equus Workforce Solutions	One-Stop Operator, Service Provider of WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, Out of School Youth Programs
SCSEP Program	Senior Community Service Employment Program, Employment and Training Assistance
Job Corps, DOL – Insights Training Group, LLC	Job Corps Programs
SC Department of Employment and Workforce	Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker Program
SC Department of Employment and Workforce	Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs
SC Department of Employment and Workforce	Unemployment Insurance Compensation
SC Department of Employment and Workforce	Veteran’s Employment and Training Programs
SC Department of Employment and Workforce	Wagner-Peyser Employment Services Program
SC Department of Social Services – Chester, Lancaster, and York Counties	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Programs
SC Department of Social Services – Chester, Lancaster, and York Counties	Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program
SC Vocational Rehabilitation Department – Lancaster and Rock Hill Area (Rock Hill Area Office covers Chester)	Rehabilitation Programs for Individuals with Disabilities
United Way	Family Financial Literacy and Stability
York Technical College	Post-Secondary Education Programs (Perkins)
Pathways	Housing, Shelter, Food, Medical
Pilgrim’s Inn	Housing, Shelter, Food

Affinity Health	Medical Assistance
WelVista	Prescription Drug Assistance


The One-Stop Operator has facilitated individual meetings with partners to develop a working Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with specific methods of partnering being established that supports alignment of services throughout the Local Area. Please see the attached Memorandum of Understanding, including the Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) Budget for more detail.

The Catawba Local Workforce Area has nurtured collaborative partnerships that support alignment. By working together with various communities, businesses, local Chambers of Commerce, workforce partners, economic development, local and county government, and other workforce stakeholders/colleagues in each county, partners can leverage funds, assets, processes, and knowledge. Very often agencies may serve the same population but offer different services and resources. If worked efficiently and in alignment, these partnerships allow us to provide wrap around services rather than duplicating existing services. This alignment results in fewer missed steps on an individual’s customer experience on their journey to self-sufficiency. Regular cross agency staff collaboration and communication lead to more successful outcomes for the participant. Wrap around services effectively provide a holistic approach, starting with the basics including food, housing, clothing, and healthcare needs. By utilizing our partnerships with United Way, SNAP, DSS, Housing Authority, WelVista, Affinity Health Center, Carolina Community Actions, and other partners within the area, we can help stabilize the job seeker, so they can focus on employment and training activities.

The 2022 Catawba Regional Reentry Program has proven to be successful in helping justice involved individuals in the Local Area. The Reentry Program of 2022 strengthened our relationships with several partners including Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), Probation, Pardon, & Parole (PPP), and multiple community-based partners. Although the grant for a dedicated Reentry Navigator has ended, we continue to serve this population with our other Career Advisors.

We continue to offer JET (Job Endurance Training) through our SC Works Centers, Rock Hill Housing Authority, Adult Educations Centers, and other partners.

JET Train the Trainer



- 4 Sessions held with over 60 individuals in attendance.
- Good feedback but limited survey participation.
- Resulted in some extended conversations with employers about implementation.

**3) A description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to:**

- **Expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, including individuals with barriers to employment:**

The key to expanding access to employment, training, education and support services is continued and enhanced collaboration with core, required, and non-traditional partners. This is especially important for services that provide individuals relief while they are enrolled in school, participating in work experience, on-the-job training, and other work-based learning activities.

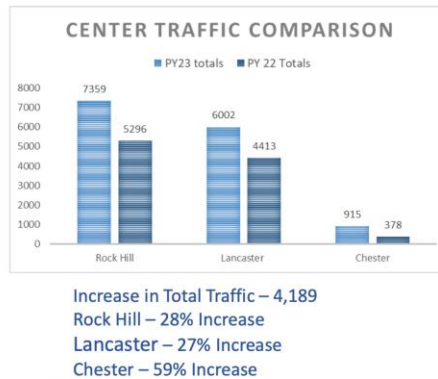
Catawba Local Workforce Area invites and encourages partner engagement at quarterly partner meetings held in each county. These meetings help inform all partners of services offered. The sharing facilitates the alignment of resources and provides information to avoid duplication of services.

The Catawba Workforce Development Board's Priority Populations Committee actively consider ways to better serve individuals with disabilities. Partnerships with SCVRD, SC Commission for the Blind, and Able SC to host workshops with employers to highlight benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities have been successful. We have partnerships with Foster Care for those aging out of the system at eighteen including Children's Attention Home and Lancaster Children's Home. Our focused and strong relationship with area high school guidance counselors provide referrals of students to SC Works who are graduating or leaving high school without a credential, and with no further education plans.

Strategies that support our commitment to an exemplary customer-driven workforce system that aligns with our partners include:

- Recruiting blasts are being sent out by text and email to individuals identified as recently registering in SCWOS.
- Groups identified by industry sector receive targeted blasts through email and text with information regarding growth in the industry or in a related industry.
- Groups identified as underemployed receive Industry Sector rack cards through text and email spotlighting industries to interest them in pursuing career opportunities within one of the Local Workforce Area in-demand industry sectors.
- SC Works networks with area SCPATH approved training providers and shares training opportunities through text and email with Catawba Local Area job seekers that prepares them for in-demand positions that pay a livable wage in the Catawba Local Area.
- Concentrated and targeted advertising is done through text, email, and Facebook of JET and the benefits of gaining the sought-after employability skills and concentrated and targeted advertising is done through text, email, and Facebook of our LEGACY Job Readiness preparation curriculum designed for our 17 to 24-year-old young adults.
  - Annual Average Facebook 44,069 reached with 851-page likes

- Annual Average Instagram 357 reached with 149 followers
- Co-enrollments are encouraged and occur through collaboration with partners to enhance the opportunities for supportive services to assist with successful outcomes.
- Participants are assessed based on interests and they are placed in virtual or face-to-face group settings to form cohorts with similar goals to provide a supportive and networking culture.
- Center traffic has increased significantly.



- **Improve access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential, including an industry-recognized certificate or certification that is portable and stackable:**

The Catawba Local Area actively seeks programs/providers of short-term training for our identified in-demand sectors and occupations. Our partnership with the Adult Education Centers provides a referral system to move students into occupational skills training as soon as they receive their GED or high school diploma or concurrently while they are preparing for the GED test. One area of demand has been CDL training especially since the pandemic. We have approved additional CDL training providers to meet the demand and added Arclabs Welding School that offers a 280-hour process welding certification and a 280-hour process welding with OSHA10. Recent CDL training providers added include: 160 Driving Academy, CL Driving School, and Commercial Driving Academy that offers Class A Auto Transmission, Class A Manual Transmission, Class B, Hazmat certifications.

- **Facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations:**

Development Results, LLC has been awarded the contract to facilitate the Central Region Sector Partnership which focuses on advanced manufacturing. This project brings together manufacturing employers, economic development entities, educators, workforce development agencies, etc. to collaborate on addressing the skills gap in the local workforce. The Central Region is made up of three local workforce areas – Catawba (Chester, Lancaster, York Counties), Midlands (Fairfield, Lexington, Richland Counties) and Lower Savannah (Aiken, Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Calhoun, Orangeburg Counties). Each workforce area has their own senior consultant. We have 5

manufacturing companies from each local area who agreed to participate. The consultants work with participating employers to learn about their skills gap concerns. In an effort to make participation convenient, all meetings are attended in person or virtually. The ultimate goal is to find workable solutions for skills gaps and provide a framework for the collaboration to continue after the project end date.

Summary: Central Sector Partnership 1st Sub-Regional Meeting (October 2, 2024)

### *Communication Challenges and Solutions*

- **Promoting Manufacturing Careers:**
  - Emphasize career growth opportunities in manufacturing to K-12 students, parents, and college students.
  - Companies to share career pathways and salary ranges.
  - Use women in manufacturing for outreach to increase DEI.
  - Increase employer participation in career fairs and events with testimonies from successful graduates.
  - Target key school influencers (e.g., coaches, teachers) for tours and outreach.
  - Explore sponsorship models like "Leader in Me" for K-12 programs.
- **Improving Collaboration with Schools:**
  - Define clear points of contact for companies at K-12 and technical colleges.
  - Utilize regional workforce advisors and technical college presidents for streamlined connections.
- **Addressing Dual Enrollment Gaps:**
  - Promote dual enrollment in manufacturing and IT by identifying non-college-bound students early.
  - Educate students on career opportunities in trades, manufacturing, and IT.

### *Skills Gaps and Workforce Readiness*

- **Technical Skills:**
  - Increase training in CNC, maintenance, and safety.
  - Identify mechanically inclined students early for manufacturing careers.
  - Incorporate practical computer skills training (e.g., Excel, AI) into dual enrollment programs.
- **Soft Skills:**
  - Emphasize punctuality, attendance, and workplace behavior in all training programs.
  - Develop and share a universal soft skills curriculum for technical colleges.
  - Highlight successful models like SCMEP's Op Exchange, Catawba JET, and Workforce Readiness courses.

### *Leadership and Upward Mobility*

- **Leadership Development:**
  - Create shared leadership training curricula tailored to company needs.

- Leverage retiring workers part-time to train others.
- Incorporate leadership skills into apprenticeship and dual enrollment programs.
- **Collaboration for Training Viability:**
  - Coordinate among technical colleges to meet minimum student numbers for classes.
  - Explore funding options where companies pay trainees during classes.

### *Manufacturing Culture*

- **Cultural Awareness:**
  - Integrate shift work expectations and manufacturing culture training into dual enrollment and GED programs.
  - Promote the positive aspects of manufacturing culture to improve perception.

### *Other Key Topics*

- **Soft Skills Integration:**
  - Incorporate soft skills, leadership, and cultural training into shorter certificate courses.
- **Addressing Employee Retention:**
  - Pilot programs to reduce employee poaching and develop local sector partnerships.

### *Promising Models and Programs*

- Examples include "Leader in Me," Manufacturing Fundamentals, Manufirst, Microburst Learning, and Jump Start programs.
- A state portal launching in January 2025 will provide continuously updated resources for companies and students.

### *Next Steps*

- Enhance collaboration between schools and companies.
- Promote manufacturing career pathways and dual enrollment opportunities.
- Address skills and leadership gaps through shared curricula and innovative training solutions.

## Summary: Central Regional Sector Partnership Meeting

**Date:** November 20, 2024

**Location:** SCETV, Columbia, SC

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### Key Highlights

#### *Institution Updates*

1. **York Technical College:**
    - Offers soft skills training embedded in certifications and as standalone programs.
    - Manufacturing Fundamentals program available on-demand or regularly scheduled.
    - Customizable skill training (e.g., PLC) based on employer needs.
  2. **Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College:**
    - Offers Lean training (Yellow Belt for process improvement) and welding programs.
    - Uses NCCER and MSSC curriculums for maintenance tech and certified production technician training.
    - Provides Manufirst and customized training for specific employers.
  3. **Midlands Technical College:**
    - Customizes training for employers, including welding and soft skills programs.
    - Open to case-by-case accommodations for learning disabilities in academic programs.
  4. **Denmark Technical College:**
    - Ongoing welding programs and Industrial Technology Certificate with MSSC, OSHA, Lean, and NCCER certifications.
  5. **Aiken Technical College:**
    - Unable to join due to technical difficulties.
- 

#### *Key Programs and Services*

- **Apprenticeship Carolina:**
  - Supports registered apprenticeships with on-the-job training, classes, and scalable wage progression.
- **SCDEW Regional Workforce Advisors:**
  - Initiatives like Microburst for soft skills in high schools and "Coffee with Mentors" to practice job readiness skills.
- **Job Endurance Training (JET):**
  - Free monthly soft skills training with Train-the-Trainer options for employers.
- **SCDEW WIN:**

- Provides free job analysis, digital literacy, and soft skills assessments tied to DOL standards.
  - **Palmetto Training:**
    - CDL, welding, machining training using national curriculums like NCCER and MSSC.
  - **DSS:**
    - Supports SNAP participants with soft skills training and resources like childcare, food, and gas stipends for TANF recipients.
  - **Richland 2 Career Center:**
    - Needs employers to identify certifications they value to align training programs.
  - **Transfr VR:**
    - Offers VR career exploration and training for youth and adults.
  - **Coordinating Council for Workforce Development (CCWD):**
    - Developing a central portal for resource coordination and addressing statewide challenges like childcare and transportation.
- 

### *Employer Concerns & Suggestions*

1. **Training and Certification Clarity:**
    - Employers need a standardized language for certifications and skills.
    - Request for a taxonomy of foundational manufacturing programs and ONET skill levels.
  2. **Soft Skills & Leadership Training:**
    - Need for more solutions targeting supervisor and manager skill development.
  3. **Resource Navigation:**
    - Employers seek a central contact to streamline access to workforce resources.
  4. **Youth Engagement:**
    - Greater focus on youth apprenticeships and career exploration in schools.
  5. **Barriers:**
    - Transportation remains a significant obstacle for workforce participation.
- 

### *Next Steps*

1. **Top Priorities:**
  - Steering Committee to identify 3-4 focus areas for the next meeting.
2. **Resource Coordination:**
  - Present CCWD portal for better navigation of statewide resources.
3. **Employer Collaboration:**
  - Encourage employers to share two-year hiring needs and participate in school outreach.
4. **Future Meetings:**



- Invite agencies and providers offering targeted solutions for identified priorities.

### **Next meeting scheduled for February 5, 2025-location to be determined**

The Catawba Workforce Development Board (WDB) collaborates with partners and community agencies to assist employers in gaining access to an untapped pool of viable candidates and resources. The WDB invests WIOA Title I funding to assist employers. One of the most popular programs is the On-the-Job Training program. This program is designed to establish a continuous flow of qualified candidates, by reimbursing the employer a percentage of the new hire's wages during a negotiated training period. This program gives area employers the opportunity to train new employees to their specific standards and can do so in a cost-effective manner.

Similar to the On-the Job Training program is the Transitional Employment program. This program is designed to provide participants with the work experience necessary to assure that they are more competitive in today's job market. Transitional Employment opportunities are time-limited and subsidized up to 100 percent. These jobs are in the public, private, or nonprofit sectors and are available for individuals with barriers to employment, who are chronically unemployed or have an inconsistent work history. While the Transitional Employment program serves adults, we also have a Paid Work Experience Program for youth ages 17 – 24.

Job Fairs also serve as an important way to engage business customers. The Catawba Local Area has done many types of job fairs over the years. Some have been huge with 30+ employers with large crowds and some have been smaller, industry specific events. We also assist the Rural Outreach Team from SCDEW in hosting Rural Job fairs for each county to help reach jobseekers in those areas.

Hiring Events serve as individualized sourcing opportunities for the employers within the Catawba area. Hiring Events are typically held for one employer at a time with a single focus on that company's individual hiring needs. These events are designed to capture the attention of all jobseekers and enrolled WIOA participants and can be held at the local SC Works Center or on site at the company's facility.

When State WIOA funds are available, as mentioned above, SC Works Catawba facilitates the Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) Program. The purpose of the IWT program is to assist employers with upgrading the skills of current employees to keep businesses and workers competitive. The target demographic of this program includes private sector employers located in Chester, Lancaster, and York counties faced with changing skill requirements due to new technology, retooling, new product lines, and new organizational restructuring.

SC Works Catawba hosts quarterly Partner and Business Solutions Team meetings to stay connected and share information on events and services offered in the region. We have

worked closely with partners in hosting area-specific events, information sessions, job fairs, hiring events, JET sessions, and other internally developed programs that target area businesses and partners. Employer Forums have been used to present a summary of the available services to Catawba Region employers. Our county job fairs are a coordinated effort between the local Chamber staff, Economic Development staff, SC Works integrated business partners, and SC Works staff.

Our relationships with economic development organizations, community partners, and the business sector have evolved into strong, mutually beneficial alliances. These partnerships are grounded in a shared commitment to exchanging best practices and driving meaningful change. New initiatives have emerged, incorporating additional partners who bring valuable expertise to the table.

For example, the Rock Hill Economic Development Workforce Development Committee has set ambitious goals and objectives for 2025, including:

- Conducting an industry skills gap analysis by sector for the Rock Hill and York County areas.
- Completing job mapping opportunities by industry and company to align with workforce needs.
- Developing actionable recommendations to support future workforce development initiatives by March 31, 2025.

Together, we are creating strategies to relaunch the talent pipeline, implementing a targeted plan to engage the veteran community in building a skilled workforce for local employers, and developing a comprehensive resource guide to help job seekers and employers streamline resource utilization effectively.

- **Support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the LWDA:**

The Catawba Workforce Development Board understands that business is a primary customer of the workforce system, and we strive to meet the needs and expectations of the employers in the Local Area. The soft skills gap, or often referred to by business as essential skills gap, is an important element to our program design methodology.

The Sector Partnership Groups described above strengthen sector strategies and career pathways that benefit both employers and jobseekers. Frequent communication between economic development, partners, and training providers helps anticipate employer needs and expectations. The input gathered in Sector Partnership Groups and ongoing employer engagement will inform and validate how the workforce system can meet the needs of business. We will use trusted technologies to reach business to get feedback and input efficiently such as webinars, emails, surveys, etc. The Catawba Workforce Development Board will explore artificial intelligence opportunities to further communication with and outreach to our business communities.

Catawba Local Area's Integrated Business Solutions Team will be guided by meaningful

data, employer input, and partner alignment.

- **Improve coordination between workforce development programs and economic development:**

The workforce development program and economic development in the Catawba Local Area have a strong collaborative relationship. Economic Development Representatives are members of the Catawba Workforce Development Board and actively participate with the Board Committees. During our quarterly Integrated Business Solutions Team meetings, economic development joins the team to discuss employer needs. Included is information on new employers that may not be informed of the workforce system services. SC Works Team Members join Economic Development in meeting with employers to ensure they are fully aware of the resources available to them at no cost.

The Catawba Area is also part of the South Carolina I-77 Alliance footprint (5 counties of Chester, Fairfield, Lancaster, Richland, and York) and we will continue to work with this economic development alliance to strengthen the workforce pipeline in our region by staying connected and promoting their target industries. The Catawba Regional Council of Governments Workforce Development Board and SC Works partners are committed to connecting individuals with jobs, education, and training while supporting employers in finding skilled workers, accessing tax credits, managing unemployment taxes, and more.

- **Strengthen linkages between the SC Works delivery system and unemployment insurance programs:**

There is a strong partnership with the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) representatives that are housed in the Local Area's comprehensive SC Works Centers in Lancaster and Rock Hill. Referrals are frequently made for those identified participants receiving Unemployment Insurance (UI) to job readiness activities and possible one-on-one assistance that can be provided for those eligible for individualized WIOA career services. DEW staff in other SC Works Centers also refer UI claimants to the same services.

With assistance from the labor market information pulled from the SC Works platform, the industry and area-specific information pulled by the Business Intelligence Department, labor market information received from the SCDEW and economic development, and information received directly from Catawba Local Area employers, the Business Solutions Team has ensured that every demographic has access to information that is pertinent to our economic prosperity and growth. Due to the existence of an uncertain economy and operating during unprecedented times, the dissemination of information is prioritized by need for our participants. By identifying the resources that provide the most assistance in meeting the basic needs of those we serve, we can help keep our communities informed. Weekly email and text blasts go out containing information ranging from *Unemployment Insurance Updates* to *Featured Weekly Job Listings*, to resources on soft skills development. The Business Solutions Team remains in

contact with area employers and partners to assure that they have access to business support and hiring opportunities presented by SC Works. A quarterly hybrid partners meeting is held in various locations throughout the year to keep everyone connected and informed.

**4) A description of how the strategies discussed in Question 3 above will be aligned with the priorities outlined in the WIOA State Plan; specifically addressing the following:**

- **Developing and implementing cross-partner staff training to enhance service delivery to job seekers and business:**

The Catawba Workforce Development Board currently has professional development for staff and Board Members as a goal. Staff have been enrolled in a national certification program, Certified Workforce Development Professional, to provide training on all facets of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. It includes lessons related to Economic Development, Vocational Rehabilitation, Reentry and other partner information.

The Catawba Local Area will identify opportunities for cross-partner staff training starting with sharing information about each partner program during Partner Quarterly meetings and Business Solutions Team meetings. We will seek out State training offerings to share across partnerships, identify webinars that would benefit cross-training, and seek offerings through organizations such as the National Association of Workforce Development Professionals. Info sessions for partners to train on their target populations, goals, eligibility criteria, service menu, referral processes, and paperwork will be held in conjunction with the partner meetings.

To support the implementation of our SC Works Certification Standards, our SC Works Centers close to the public for a full day every two months. This allows all center staff to engage in team-building, cross-training, and strategic planning activities. The One-Stop Operator and the management of co-located partners work collaboratively to plan and facilitate these sessions.

The meetings feature a range of expert speakers and cover relevant topics, including Active Shooter Awareness training by local law enforcement, Reentry and Poverty Simulations, Mental Health Awareness presentations led by the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), and Human Trafficking awareness. Additionally, sessions have included information on the Work Opportunity Tax Credit and Federal Bonding programs by SC DEW, SC DEW Labor Market Information, and other engaging and informative presentations.

During these bi-monthly team meetings, we thoroughly cover at least one SC Works Certification Standard, a Center Safety Element, and a LEGACY Standard. We also feature a partner initiative or program and discuss needs so that we can collectively problem solve. The rollout of the Your Next Step rebranding, along with the SC Works

101 Training initiative, has provided valuable tools. This training has been instrumental in broadening the concept of a workforce system made up of many partners with a common purpose rather than focusing on individual programs within workforce centers. Equus staff, co-located partner staff, and those that spend time in the centers embrace the concept of working in tandem to serve job seekers and businesses of the Catawba area.

- **Increasing the percentage of participants that obtain high value credentials:**

A key component of high-value credentials is offering a diverse range of short-term certification options. As outlined above, the Catawba Workforce Development Board has actively expanded its network of training providers to meet the needs of in-demand industries and occupations. This expansion has resulted in a 20% increase in available training slots, providing job seekers and youth with greater choice and access to relevant programs.

Career Advisors work closely with job seekers and youth to help them understand the labor market and identify careers that offer living wages and opportunities for advancement. As a result of this personalized guidance, the number of job seekers securing positions with a living wage has increased by 15% over the past year. Additionally, 30% more youth participants are enrolled in training programs that align with high-growth, high-demand sectors, further enhancing their career prospects and long-term economic mobility.

- **Increasing access to education and training necessary for individuals to use Broadband to advance their personal goals and increase South Carolina's technology workforce competitiveness:**

In keeping with one of the State of South Carolina's guiding principles, Catawba Local Area will use existing technologies and research new technologies that will open doors for increased access to resources and services. We will work with partners and business customers to identify appropriate and relevant software and artificial intelligence tools.

Broadband allows users to access information via the Internet using one of several high-speed transmission technologies. Transmission is digital, meaning that text, images, and sound are all transmitted as "bits" of data. The transmission technologies that make broadband possible move these bits much more quickly than traditional telephone or wireless connections, including traditional dial-up Internet access connections. It is imperative that today's workforce and the workforce of the future understand Broadband and how to use it. Catawba Local Area will work with educational partners to invest in opportunities to increase participants access to education and training to use Broadband. The investment will increase South Carolina's technology workforce competitiveness. See the vision and possible opportunities below from the SC Broadband office (SCBBO) and the SC Digital

# Opportunity Department (DOD).

## SCBBO & DOD

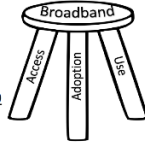
*"Our vision is for all South Carolinians to have access to affordable, reliable, highspeed internet, and to gain the necessary skills to benefit from this technology."*

### South Carolina Broadband Office (SCBBO)

- Focused on expanding **access**

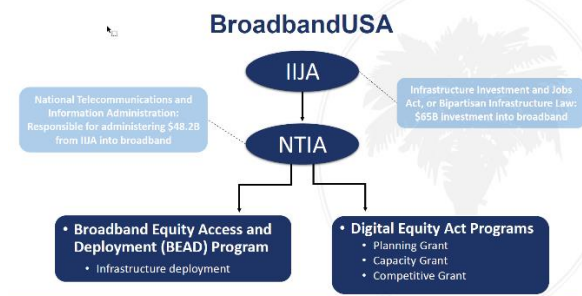
### South Carolina Digital Opportunity Department (DOD)

- Focused on **adoption** and **use**



## Broadband & Digital Equity Outcomes

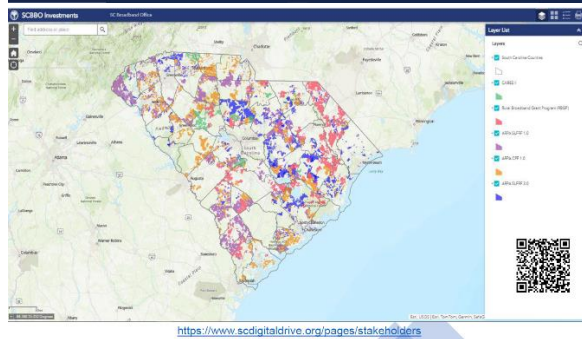
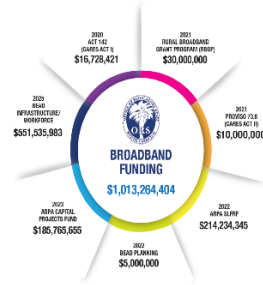
- **Economic and workforce development**
  - Receiving employment updates, digital skills needed to perform jobs
- **Education**
  - Online assignments, virtual school, online continuing education
- **Health**
  - Telehealth appointments, access to online records
- **Civic and social engagement**
  - Community engagement and message delivery
- **Delivery of other essential services**
  - Dissemination of critical information in emergency settings



### About the SCBBO...

- ✓ Office created July 2021
- ✓ 2021-22 Budget Proviso Ratified by SC General Assembly Sections 73.6-73.7
- ✓ **Administering Broadband Deployment Grants**
  - ✓ Established Broadband Advisory Council (BBAC)
  - ✓ Map/Model statewide broadband availability annually
  - ✓ Evaluate grant applications, issue grant awards
  - ✓ Provide management and oversight of funded projects
  - ✓ Eligible Applicants are Internet Service Providers (ISPs)
  - ✓ Financial match is required by the ISP
  - ✓ Prioritize Fiber to the Premise (FTTP)

<https://ors.sc.gov/broadband>



## Proposed Digital Equity Plan Initiatives

1. Secure SC
2. Digital Navigators
3. Minigrants
4. Device Recycling



### SecureSC – \$1.25mil

- Cybersecurity month in October
- SecureSC website and media campaign
- Toolkits and funding for community organizations to host events
- Cybersecurity and privacy resources for South Carolinians
- Digital literacy resources for South Carolinians

ing NTIA Approval

Pending NTIA Approval



### Digital Navigators - \$2mil

- DOD Plans:
- Provide stipends to 25 organizations providing digital literacy services to create a cohort of Digital Navigators
  - Create statewide "best practices" to certify existing programs
  - Create an online learning module to become a Digital Navigator
  - Create a database of trusted Digital Navigators


### Digital Navigators can help you...

- Learn how to use your device (basics)
- Log onto telehealth appointments
- Navigate online bills
- Provide basic tech support
- Create online resumes
- Access virtual job posting boards
- Connect you to online communities
- Provide info on virtual education





ing NTIA Approval





### Device Recycling - \$2mil

Without cars, you cannot use the roads.  
Without devices, you cannot access networks.

ing NTIA Approval



### Device Recycling - \$2mil



- Device availability at low or no cost
- Partnership with existing programs to expand capacity to cover all of South Carolina
- Establish best practices of receiving devices, restoring devices, and distributing devices

ing NTIA Approval




### Minigrants - \$5mil




- Small funding pools for programs led by trusted community organizations
- Simple and navigable application process even for small teams
- Funding across every part of South Carolina
- Recipients will be named in first 9 months of project period and will receive continual funding over 4-year project period as long as key metrics are met

ing NTIA Approval



### Minigrants - \$5mil



- Waiting for approval from NTIA before releasing framework
- Expected timeline is early 2025
- **Stay up to date on timeline, eligibility requirements, and application process by subscribing to the DOD newsletter**
- For now, start thinking about programs your organization has or wants to start surrounding digital equity

ing NTIA Approval



### Apprenticeships – SCBBO BEAD



- Program through SCBBO BEAD Non-Deployment Funds, being administered by DOD
- 6-month salary + benefit reimbursement stipend for fulltime positions in South Carolina working in Broadband and Digital Equity related fields
- Requirements, eligibility, and timeline is still being developed

ing NTIA Approval



### Virtual Primary Care – SCBBO BEAD



- State Managed Program
- Program through SCBBO BEAD Non-Deployment Funds
- Address the need for telehealth technology and devices
- Intended to extend virtual health care offerings
  - Virtual primary care, specialty care, and remote patient monitoring services
- Requirements, eligibility, and timeline is still being developed

ing NTIA Approval

- **Improving strategic outreach and service delivery to employers to effectively match job seekers with employers:**

To improve strategic outreach and service delivery to employers and effectively match job seekers with employers, consider implementing the following strategies:

1. Strengthen Employer Relationships:

- **Build Long-Term Partnerships:** Develop ongoing relationships with employers through regular check-ins, personalized consultations, and attendance at industry-specific events. Understand their evolving workforce needs and challenges.
- **Targeted Employer Outreach:** Use labor market data to identify high-demand sectors and proactively engage with employers in those industries. Host industry-specific employer roundtables to gather insights and provide tailored solutions.

## 2. Enhance Job Seeker Profiling:

- **Skills & Experience Matching:** Use comprehensive assessments to identify job seekers' skills, experience, and career aspirations. Develop detailed profiles that allow for precise matching with employer requirements.
- **Create Skills Inventory Databases:** Maintain an updated database of job seekers' skills and certifications that can be easily matched to employer needs through a streamlined job-matching platform.

## 3. Leverage Technology for Job Matching:

- **Job-Matching Platforms:** Invest in technology tools (e.g., job boards, applicant tracking systems, and AI-driven platforms) that can match job seekers' profiles with job openings in real-time, improving efficiency.
- **Employ Data Analytics:** Use labor market analytics to identify regional skills gaps and adjust training programs accordingly. This ensures that job seekers are equipped with skills that meet employer demand.

## 4. Tailor Services to Employer Needs:

- **Customized Training Programs:** Offer employers access to workforce development programs and certifications that match their specific needs, such as soft skills training, technical certifications, or industry-recognized credentials.
- **Job Fair & Recruitment Events:** Organize targeted job fairs or recruitment events that align with employers' immediate needs, and offer employers the opportunity to interact with pre-screened, qualified candidates.

## 5. Improve Communication and Follow-Up:

- **Real-Time Communication:** Set up a system for real-time communication between job seekers and employers, enabling quick responses to job openings and candidate inquiries.
- **Regular Employer Follow-Ups:** After placements, conduct regular follow-ups to assess job performance, satisfaction, and retention, using this feedback to fine-tune services and improve future placements.

## 6. Provide Employer Incentives:

- **Incentives and Support Programs:** Encourage employers to engage in workforce development by offering incentives such as tax credits, wage subsidies, or assistance with training costs. Promote programs like Work Opportunity Tax Credits (WOTC) or on-the-job training subsidies.



## 7. Improve Career Coaching and Job Seeker Preparation:

- **Job Seeker Readiness:** Provide career coaching, resume-building workshops, and interview preparation for job seekers to improve their employability and ensure they meet employer expectations.
- **Soft Skills Training:** In addition to technical skills, offer training in critical soft skills such as communication, teamwork, and problem-solving that employers value.

## 8. Foster Diversity and Inclusion:

- **Inclusive Employer Outreach:** Actively engage with employers to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in hiring practices, ensuring that underrepresented groups have equal access to opportunities.
- **Targeted Programs for Diverse Populations:** Develop initiatives focused on specific groups, such as veterans, youth, or individuals with disabilities, to address their unique barriers and match them with inclusive employers.

By implementing these strategies, you can create a more effective, responsive, and dynamic system that matches job seekers to employers while meeting the needs of both parties.

- **Increasing awareness of resources to mitigate obstacles to employment:**

Barriers to getting and keeping a job are often difficult to navigate. The Catawba Workforce Development Board has established significant partnerships with core, required, and non-traditional partners. Many non-traditional partners are community-based organizations that have access to basic needs resources.

These partnerships allow us to provide wrap around services rather than duplicating existing services. This alignment results in fewer missed steps on an individual's customer experience on their journey to self-sufficiency. Regular cross agency staff collaboration and communication lead to more successful outcomes for the participant. Wrap around services effectively provide a holistic approach, starting with the basics including food, housing, clothing, and healthcare needs. By utilizing our partnerships with United Way, SNAP, DSS, Housing Authority, WelVista, Affinity Health Center, Carolina Community Actions, and other partners within the area, we can help stabilize the job seeker, so they can focus on employment and training activities.

To effectively use existing and new technologies to communicate the availability of supportive services and establish tracking systems, follow these steps:

### 1. Develop a Centralized Communication Platform:

- **Create a Digital Resource Hub:** Build or enhance a website or portal where all available supportive services (such as training programs, financial assistance, childcare support, etc.) can be easily accessed by potential applicants. This can include a searchable database of services and eligibility requirements.
- **Mobile Access:** Ensure the platform is mobile-friendly, so individuals can access information from any device, expanding reach and accessibility.
- **Social Media and Email Campaigns:** Use social media platforms, email newsletters, and text messaging to reach potential applicants and inform them about available services. Social media posts, infographics, and videos can increase engagement and awareness.

### 2. Leverage Existing Technologies: SCDEW is currently seeking proposals for a case management system. We currently utilize SCWOS (SC Works Online Services through GeoSol).

- **Job Boards & Career Websites:** Partner with job boards and career platforms to feature available services alongside job listings. Include links to supportive services directly on job postings, so applicants can easily find help.
- **Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS):** Use ATS to manage and track applicants throughout their journey. This system can include automated notifications to remind individuals of supportive services available to them based on their profile or job applications.
- **CRM Systems:** Utilize customer relationship management (CRM) software to store and share information about applicants and the services they are accessing. CRM can help track communication with applicants and ensure they are connected to the right support.

### 3. Collaborate with Partners to Establish Integrated Tracking Systems:

- **Data Sharing Platforms:** Implement shared platforms or software that allow multiple entities (e.g., workforce development organizations, training providers, community service agencies) to track and report services provided to applicants. Ensure these systems have secure data-sharing capabilities while maintaining privacy and compliance with data protection regulations.
- **Case Management Systems:** Use integrated case management systems that allow case workers to update and share service delivery details, track outcomes, and identify gaps. This ensures that all entities involved in an applicant's journey have access to the same information and can collaborate effectively.
- **Real-Time Data Entry:** Allow partners to enter data in real-time during interactions with applicants. This ensures services provided are logged accurately and up-to-date across multiple platforms.

#### 4. Monitor and Measure Outcomes:

- **Outcome Tracking:** Use the tracking systems to monitor the progress of applicants who receive supportive services. Collect data on job placement, retention, career advancement, and other outcomes to measure the effectiveness of the services.
- **Shared Reporting:** Create shared reports and dashboards that display key outcomes, such as the number of applicants served, the services provided, and their impact. This data can help partners identify successful services and improve future service delivery.
- **Regular Reviews:** Schedule regular meetings with partners to review shared data, identify trends, and discuss improvements to services based on outcomes.

#### 5. Continuous Improvement and Feedback Loops:

- **Applicant Feedback:** Incorporate feedback mechanisms, such as surveys or follow-up calls, to gather insights from applicants about their experiences with supportive services. This feedback can be shared through the tracking system and used to refine services.
- **Partner Feedback:** Similarly, gather feedback from partners about how the tracking systems are working, identify challenges, and discuss opportunities for collaboration or system upgrades.
- **Iterative Technology Enhancements:** Regularly review and update communication and tracking technologies to ensure they are aligned with the needs of applicants and partners. Incorporate new tools or features that improve accessibility, data accuracy, and service delivery.

By using these strategies, you can enhance communication about available services, track service provision and outcomes, and foster collaboration among partners to create a seamless experience for applicants and drive positive results.

- **Implementing a multifaceted outreach strategy to rural and underserved communities to ensure that individuals living in these rural areas of South Carolina have access to employment and training resources:**

Technology...technology...technology!!! Access to broadband and education on how to use broadband will provide avenues of outreach that will give the Catawba Local Area the opportunity to communicate service options to rural and underserved communities. During this planning cycle we will explore web-based services related to soft skills, job search, pre-employment skills, and assessment. Our educational partners are continuing to launch web-based employment and training options to serve rural and underserved communities.

Catawba Local Area will continue to utilize popular social media platforms. Social media is a staple today. As the world, and the Catawba Local Area, continues to shift

more and more towards digital technology, it becomes increasingly important for us to use all the resources available. Catawba Local Area has established guidelines with the State of South Carolina for approvals to use social media in a safe and effective manner. Social media provides the workforce system a presence on multiple platforms focusing on diverse users of each to share content, advertise, engage existing and potential customers, and to increase our community's familiarity with the employment and training services available. Forbes magazine has published that in 2024, 90% of users follow at least one brand on social media. Social media is less expensive than traditional advertising where a single share or repost can reach hundreds or thousands of people for free. The vast majority of individuals have access to social media, if not on a computer, on their phones.

Catawba Local Area will utilize YouTube to educate and inform individuals in rural and underserved communities. This will include both short-form video content and long-form video content. Short-form content will engage viewers quickly and focus on a single message while long-form content can contain customer success stories, live streaming of events such as job fairs and career fairs, and training topics such as preparing for interviews. YouTube is reported to primarily attract 16- to 40-year-olds.

Instagram continues to be one of the most popular social media platforms that we will explore that primarily reaches an 18- to 34-year-old audience. This age group is a key market for registered apprenticeships and web-based learning in rural and underserved communities. Video content, photos, and hashtags will focus on recruitment and outreach activities.

Facebook is still the largest social media platform and can serve as a virtual storefront for our employment and training programs. The Catawba Local Area can create custom Facebook Groups targeting rural and underserved populations. This allows us the opportunity to tailor our messages to these specific segments of our existing and potential customer base. This social media platform is reported to be more popular among 40- to 65-year-old individuals.

Catawba Local Area, especially the Business Solutions Team, will utilize Metrix both as an outreach tool and an educational content resource to increase the workforce system's visibility. Included will be interviews with in-demand industry representatives related to occupations for rural and underserved communities to consider. Catawba Local Area will share industry trends and news and assist the business community in job postings as appropriate.

- **Identifying resources and funding opportunities to provide services to jobseekers:**

Funding for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and Wagner Peyser have experienced significant decreases in the past years. No one funding stream has the financial resources to provide all of the education, training, and wrap-around services needed to assist individuals in preparing for and getting a job that pays a living wage ideally in a career path that offers advancement opportunities. The broad array of partners Catawba Local Area described previously in this Plan, contribute resources

particularly in terms of supportive services that help leverage the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and Wagner Peyser funding. Supportive services range from books, tuition, license fees, uniforms, transportation, child care, housing assistance, auto repair, utility payments, legal services, tools, technology, food pantries, to clothing closets.

Of concern is the need to assist participants with the cost of broadband. Catawba Local Area will work with the partners to identify resources to pay for Internet services.

In addition, the Catawba Workforce Development Board staff will be identifying national, state, and foundation grants which may specifically address the needs of jobseekers when funding is not available elsewhere. We will be seeking funding for registered apprenticeships, reentry programs, disability special projects, recently separated military, and other targeted options to expand and meet the needs of jobseekers.

- **Communicating opportunities to the workforce system:**

The One-Stop Operator in Catawba Local Area convenes a meeting at least quarterly with all of the partners. These meetings involve sharing information, briefing on funding opportunities, training on partner services, statistical analysis of service levels and performance, and brainstorming innovative program designs. Informal contact with partners occurs between meetings on a regular, if not daily, basis.

The Catawba Local Area has an active Business Solutions Team that meets regularly to discuss employer/business services and share information on job openings, required skills and knowledge updates. Economic Development Representatives attend the Business Solutions Team meetings and provide information on new businesses and the need and expectation of the business communities they work with.

- **Identifying and strategically targeting training providers in the state that are offering programs in the infrastructure, energy, and advanced manufacturing sectors:**

The Catawba Local Area's Business Solutions Team collects data on existing needs of in-demand industries and occupations. Working with the Educational Representatives on the Catawba Workforce Development Board, an inventory of existing training providers will be captured, and a review done quarterly of the Eligible Training Provider List to see if there are providers not on the list. Training providers in the Catawba Local Area who are not on the Eligible Training Provider list will be contacted and assisted in getting approvals to get them on the list. York Technical College is committed to expanding its course offerings on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) to provide greater access to training opportunities for job seekers.

**5) A description of how the LWDB will work with core, required, and other partners, including economic development, to implement the strategies and services discussed in Question 3:**

The Catawba Workforce Development Board understands that achieving the strategies we have in place will require continued and enhanced partner collaboration. We will work with our partners to leverage resources and provide wrap-around services in addition to the traditional employment and training activities. Wrap-around services will address barriers that challenge individuals and disrupt their pursuit of a meaningful career to realize a better quality of life.

Economic Development working with the Business Solutions Team, will identify in-demand industry employers and coordinate efforts to communicate what the Catawba Local Area has to assist business in meeting their needs and expectations related to hiring, upgrading, recruitment, and screening.

The Catawba Workforce Development Board will work with partners to identify potential grants and funding to supplement existing resources. When appropriate, we will collaborate on the submission of joint proposals. This will be particularly important as we navigate the need to increase access to broadband and technology capabilities.

The Business Solutions Team and Economic Development will communicate in-demand industry employers needs and expectations with the Talent Development Team and Partner Group. The coordination between the Business Solutions Team, Economic Development, and the Partner Group will provide informed choices for training providers and in-demand industries and occupations. Jobseekers exiting from the Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs will have a greater chance for success if they have the skills and knowledge needed and expected by the employers. This also involves ongoing research into available training providers within the Catawba Local Area, as well as identifying in-demand industries and occupations from providers outside our region. In the case where there is no training available locally to meet the employer hiring needs, the Business Solutions Team will work with educational institutions to plan additional customized certifications.

**6. A description of the Adult, DW, and Youth assessment processes of soft-skills and subsequent provision of soft-skills training, including descriptions of formal tools or resources utilized.**

During the Catawba Local Area Sector Partnership Group discussions, employers will validate what they need and expect from applicants and employees related to soft skills or as they have become calling them, essential skills. There is no formal tool used currently to assess soft skills. The process of evaluating soft skills, particularly those identified by employers as needed and expected, begins with the objective assessment during enrollment. Multiple SC Works staff look for social and physical cues by observing how participants interact with others. Participants are engaged in conversation and asked about the soft skills that are important to them and discuss their level of comfort within each of

those areas. We also ask for specific examples of job seekers putting these skills in action as previous roles and interactions with their co-workers and supervisors are discussed. We take advantage of opportunities to observe personal and professional demeanor and interactions each time participants visit the SC Works Center, participate in workshops – both in-person and virtually, during one-on-one visits, and on phone calls. These observations also occur in SC Works resource rooms with universal job seekers so that appropriate referrals can be made.

As previously mentioned, we implement our JET curriculum to deliver soft skills training in the Catawba area. This three-day program runs from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. each day, typically at the SC Works Centers in the Catawba area. The program covers six key topics: Communication, Integrity, Time Management, Teamwork, Problem Solving, and Conflict Resolution. JET is flexible, allowing it to be facilitated in its entirety or in individual modules based on the needs of the audience. It is open to all our partners, the general public, and available to all WIOA participants.

Soft skills identified by employers that are not included in the JET curriculum are coached on an individual basis by the Career Advisors.

The Catawba Local Board has approved sharing JET Train-the-Trainer sessions with employers' Human Resource Managers to strengthen the soft skills of their incumbent employees. Catawba offers companies turnkey solutions with ready-to-use materials, streamlining the process and saving employers valuable time and effort. With this customizable curriculum, employers can tailor training to meet the unique needs of their workforce.

**7. A description of the strategies and services for employers that may include the implementation of initiatives such as Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) programs, On-the-Job Training (OJT) programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of regional employers and support the LWDB's strategic vision and goals.**

We accomplish this by being responsive to the needs of the employers in our area by reaching out to them by phone, text, email, or in person to discuss their needs and offer services based on their feedback. In addition, employers will share their needs and expectations related to applicants and employees during the Sector Partnership Group meetings. The Business Solutions Team provides valuable insight to what employers are requesting. The major need area employers have validated is filling open jobs. Hiring events are conducted each week to meet immediate needs of employers. We have had great success with On-the-Job Training, which allows employers to be reimbursed a percentage of a newly hired employees' wages while they are being trained. This encourages employers to "train their own" rather than try to find the exact skills prospective employees need. Another valuable resource that we can offer employers is Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) funds. These funds allow employers to train existing employees on new skills to increase productivity, add additional processes, etc. Analyzing the most recent data (provided by

SCDEW, Catawba COG, I-77 Alliance, etc.) and meeting with Economic Development staff and Ready SC staff on a more frequent basis will help us to anticipate needs of existing and new employers.

Our WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker service provider facilitates the IWT process and advertises when funds are made available so that businesses are aware of the process to apply for IWT funding. Individual guidance is provided to each company throughout the process. Businesses are contacted when postings that could be filled by an OJT participant are discovered in the SC Works Online system. Business Solutions Consultants also make appointments and cold calls to share information about the OJT program. The Catawba Local Area is focusing more on apprenticeships and will continue to grow and strengthen our partnership with Apprenticeship Carolina to hold events designed to educate employers on the features and benefits of this program. To establish a partnership between Apprenticeship Carolina and SC Works:

1. **Initiate a Conversation with Key Stakeholders:** Reach out to key personnel from both Apprenticeship Carolina and SC Works. You can start by contacting the leadership or representatives from both organizations to explore potential areas of collaboration. Present the idea of combining efforts to strengthen workforce development through registered apprenticeship programs.
2. **Align Objectives and Goals:** Clearly outline the shared goals between Apprenticeship Carolina and SC Works, such as increasing apprenticeship opportunities, improving the skill sets of local workers, and meeting the demands of employers. Establish how SC Works centers can provide a pathway for job seekers to access apprenticeship programs.
3. **Present a Collaborative Framework:** Propose a collaborative model where SC Works can serve as a referral point or resource hub for individuals seeking apprenticeship opportunities. Apprenticeship Carolina can offer expertise and support in developing and managing registered apprenticeship programs.
4. **Define Roles and Responsibilities:** Clearly define the roles of each partner. SC Works can assist in identifying potential apprentices, while Apprenticeship Carolina can guide the development, registration, and certification of apprenticeship programs. Discuss how both organizations can coordinate services to provide seamless support to employers and participants.
5. **Pilot Program:** Suggest starting with a pilot program or a specific industry sector to test the partnership's effectiveness. This can help both organizations assess the benefits and work out any challenges before expanding the collaboration.
6. **Provide Data and Success Stories:** Share data and examples of successful apprenticeship programs that highlight the benefits for both employers and job seekers. Use these examples to show how collaboration between Apprenticeship Carolina and SC Works can lead to measurable outcomes, such as increased apprenticeship placements, better job retention, and a skilled workforce.
7. **Formalize the Partnership:** Once both organizations have agreed on the details, formalize the partnership through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or



another official agreement that outlines the specific terms, goals, and expectations for the collaboration.

By presenting a clear vision for the collaboration, aligning goals, and ensuring both organizations' roles are well defined, you can foster a successful partnership between Apprenticeship Carolina and SC Works.

**8. A description of how the LWDB will coordinate local workforce investment activities with regional and economic development activities that are carried out in the LWDA, including how the LWDB will promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.**

The Catawba Regional Council of Governments completed a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for 2023-2027 : <https://catawba.digitalceds.com/>

The Catawba Region is an area that encompasses the four South Carolina counties of Chester, Lancaster, Union, and York; although the Workforce region remains just 3 counties : Chester, Lancaster, and York counties. Economic potential in this region is promising, due largely to the fact that location, existing development, labor force, educational institutions, and natural and cultural resources provide a sound foundation for economic growth.

The Public & Private sectors, working together, have addressed what once was a growing challenge of addressing low-income levels and unstable employment patterns, are working to identify key resources to alleviate unstable employment patterns. A coordinated economic district planning program is an important step in this positive direction.

This website presents a digital version of the most recent update to the Catawba Region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The CEDS is a formalized planning process developed by the federal Economic Development Administration (US EDA) to promote an area-wide assessment of economic trends and infrastructure needs within multi-county districts such as the Catawba Region.

Economic Development representatives are members of the Workforce Development Board and committees and are provided the opportunity to present at each meeting to keep all involved informed. We have strengthened our partnerships with the Existing Business Coordinators with the economic development department in each county by having them as Workforce Development Board and committee members and are working to expand those partnerships with area city economic development entities. These relationships throughout the area have led to increased communication, information sharing and services to employers. We work with the I-77 Alliance, which includes all three of our counties, along with Richland and Fairfield Counties, by attending their meetings and engaging with Alliance Staff members through virtual and in person meetings.

The Catawba Area is also a part of the WIOA Central Region. Local economic development representatives have served on the regional sector strategies. The Catawba Workforce Development Board will continue to support the Central Region's sector strategies and career pathways initiative as they will be beneficial to our area. The selected in-demand jobs for our local area are almost identical to those for the region, with manufacturing being at the top of both. Work with the WIOA Central Region will continue with sector strategies and workforce pipeline with the new consulting group. The South Carolina Labor Force

Participation Task Force (LFPTF) is comprised of various leaders from academia, research, and business who united to parse the available data. The goal was to determine why our state has such a low rate of labor force participation. See link for more information : [south-carolina-labor-force- participation-task-force-findings-released.](#)

Entrepreneurial and microenterprise training is a new addition to the Catawba Local Area menu of services and continues to be in the planning stages. While we know this is not the path for many of our participants, we want to be able to provide the best training possible for those best suited for these careers. We have a relationship with the Gravity Center and Winthrop Small Business Incubator and participants showing interest in entrepreneurship are informed of the dates and times of their 'Intro to Entrepreneurship' Workshops. Those with entrepreneurial aspirations are also guided to 17 courses offered by our WIOA Title I Service provider including the following:

- Entrepreneurship: Raising Startup Capital
- Entrepreneurship Foundations
- Entrepreneurship: Finding and Testing Your Business Idea
- Entrepreneurship: Bootstrapping Your Business, etc.

The Catawba Local Area's WIOA Title I service provider partners with Metrix Learning that also offers training courses that will benefit the budding entrepreneur.

The Catawba Regional Development Corporation (CRDC) provides financial support to both startup and expanding businesses through a range of loan programs, including financing options and credit for qualified borrowers.

#### **Section IV: Program Design and Evaluation**

##### **1. A description of the SC Works delivery system in the local area, including:**

- **How the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and that the providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and jobseekers:**

The Catawba Workforce Development Board's staff provide guidance to program providers so that we improve our services and outcomes. This is provided through technical assistance (in person, Zoom, phone, and email), scheduled meetings with Youth and/or Adult/Dislocated Worker (DW) staff, monitoring, etc. We measure outcomes through subsequent technical visits, monitoring, report review, and performance.

The WDB expects our WIOA Title I One-Stop Operator and Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Provider to maintain effective and efficient processes to meet local employment needs. This is done in a variety of ways:

- Being informed of employer needs and expectations by economic development, the Catawba Local Area Business Solutions Team, and the Sector Partnership Groups.
- Polling of businesses at least quarterly to see what skills potential employees need and then working with training providers to develop those programs that will help with the identified skills gaps. Polling usually takes place in person, over the phone, or by email. Other forms of technology such as on-line surveys and webinars are being considered to be administered annually for the region by county.
- Staff analyzes recent labor market information provided by SCDEW, Catawba COG, I77 Alliance, and other sources offered through economic development. The review identifies open positions in the Catawba area and the skills the positions may require.
- Providing information to job seekers to guide their choice of training to an area with in- demand opportunities. Hot Jobs are posted in each SC Works Center and emailed out to partners and participants. LMI is also available in each Center. Again, more uses of available technology are being considered to reach more job seekers and provide more up-to-date information. Virtual Reality equipment was purchased in 2021 to give job seekers ability to research available careers. Artificial Intelligence will play a role in communication and tracking efforts in the coming months and years as its uses become more understood.
- Social media is another very important tool in providing information to the area. SC Works Catawba has significantly increased their social media presence posting content almost daily on both Facebook and Instagram. Content has not been limited to SC Works activities but has also included outreach for both employers and partners. Posts include links where possible for individuals to sign up for employer and job seeker events as well as workshops. SC Works posts are also shared across other community and job seeker Facebook pages to increase engagement.
- A content calendar has been developed to ensure that posts are being made consistently and include hot jobs lists, motivational quotes, holiday posts, job search tips in addition to job fairs, hiring events, workshops and other activities going on in the Centers.
- Providing JET soft skills workshops and online training through The Academy, and Metrix to bring awareness to the importance of soft skills.

- **How the LWDB will target rural communities, including how the LWDB will use technology and other means to facilitate increased access to services provided through the SC Works delivery system:**

The Catawba Local Area’s outreach is conducted by both Wagner Peyser (WP) and WIOA staff who provide off -site assistance and workshops in remote areas throughout the Local Area, including the following:

- Kershaw Correction Facility
- Tri-District, York, Rock Hill, Fort Mill, Lancaster, and Chester Adult Education
- Catawba Indian Nation
- Christ Central Ministries
- Kershaw Area Resource Exchange (KARE)
- Probation, Pardon and Parole
- Keystone Substance Abuse Services
- York County Women’s Christian Job Corps
- Pathways
- Parent Smart
- Area High Schools and Vocational/Technology Centers
- SCDEW’s Career Coach

Catawba Local Area will continue to provide services to as many off-site locations as possible. In order to provide services more often and/or to more locations, we are using more technology and providing virtual workshops. This helps provide services to remote areas. Our WIOA One-Stop Operator has developed a toolkit of job readiness workshop videos, BST Pro Tips YouTube videos and Your Next Step tutorials that can be accessed via the internet. The strategy is to provide quality services to as many people as possible throughout our communities. We utilize space at partner locations as needed through Connection Points. Connection Points are computer labs that provide information on how to file for unemployment insurance through DEW and career services offered through SC Works. More than 150 libraries, faith-based organizations, and nonprofits across the state connect the public with access to computers and resources for unemployment and reemployment services. You can find Connection Points near you by clicking on your region [here. https://scworks.org/centers](https://scworks.org/centers)

- **How entities within the SC Works delivery system, including center operators and partners, will comply with the nondiscrimination provisions of WIOA and applicable provisions of the South Carolina Nondiscrimination Plan, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA) in regards to 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 with disabilities:**

SCDEW is dedicated to training local Equal Opportunity (EO) Coordinators, equipping them with the necessary knowledge to train staff at each center on the correct procedures for ensuring compliance with non-discrimination policies and all ADA guidelines. The Catawba Local Area One-Stop Operator conducts a “Quality Measurement Tool” assessment quarterly, rotating centers, and a review of ADA compliance. The One-Stop Operator has coordinated and hosted Information Sessions with Vocational Rehabilitation and area Mental Health representatives for staff in SC Works centers throughout the Catawba area to ensure staff awareness. These sessions will be offered in the future to ensure continued education. ADA equipment in the comprehensive center is checked at least annually to ensure proper functioning. Workforce Development Board staff schedule trainings, as needed, from SCDEW staff. Local Workforce Development Board staff and SCDEW perform annual ADA monitoring of the SC Works Centers.

- **Identification of the roles and resource contributions of the SC Works partners:**

Roles and contributions are specified in detail in the local Memorandum of Understanding and Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) attached. The Memorandum of Understanding says that each partner agrees to:

- (a) Provide access to its programs or activities through the SC Works delivery system.
- (b) Use a portion of funds made available to the partner’s program, to the extent consistent with the Federal law authorizing the partner’s program and with the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR Part 200 and as supplemented by specific Federal agency Parts and CFRs, to:
  - (1) Provide applicable career services; and
  - (2) Work collaboratively with the State and Local Board to establish and maintain the SC Works delivery system. This includes jointly funding the one-stop infrastructure costs through partner contributions that are based upon:
    - (i) A reasonable cost allocation methodology by which infrastructure costs are charged to each partner in proportion to use and relative benefits received; and
    - (ii) Federal cost principles.
- (c) Enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Catawba Workforce Development Board relating to the operation of the SC Works system; and
- (d) Participate in the operation of the SC Works system consistent with the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding, requirements of authorizing laws, the Federal cost principles, and all other applicable legal requirements.

The development and implementation of this System will require mutual trust and teamwork between the Parties all working together to accomplish shared goals and in keeping with the

main purposes and priorities of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

The PY24 IFA spreadsheets are attached.

Following is Attachment A from the Catawba MOU/IFA showing WIOA Required Services and agencies that provide them.

MOU Attachment A: WIOA REQUIRED SERVICES													
	Eligibility Deters.	Outreach & Orientation	Skills Assessments	Labor Exchange	Partner Referrals	Provision of LMI	Provision of Performance Information	Supportive Services	UI Filing	Financial Aid Assistance	Individual Career Services	Access to Training Services	Business Services
<b>REQUIRED PARTNERS</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X
Adult, DW, and Youth		X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X
Adult Education/Family Literacy		X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X
Wagner-Peyser		X		X	X	X	X				X		X
Rehab.Programs for Indiv. w/Disabilities		X	X	X	X	X		X			X	X	X
Post-Sec. Career & Tech. Ed. (Perkins)		X		X	X	X	X			X	X	X	X
CSBG Employment and Training		X		X	X	X				X	X	X	
Native American Programs		X			X	X				X	X	X	
HUD Employment and Training					X	X							
Job Corps		X		X	X	X				X	X	X	
Veterans Employment and Training		X		X	X	X				X	X	X	X
Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker						X							
Senior Community Svc. Employment		X		X	X	X					X	X	X
Trade Adjustment Assistance		X		X	X	X		X		X	X	X	
Unemployment Compensation		X		X	X	X		X			X		
YouthBuild		X			X								
TANF		X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X
Second Chance Act					X	X					X		X
<b>Eligibility Determinations:</b> Determination if an individual is eligible for WIOA Adult, DW, or Youth programs.							<b>Supportive Services:</b> Information relating to the availability of supportive services, such as child care and transportation, and referrals to supportive service programs, as needed.						
<b>Outreach &amp; Orientation:</b> Information on and access to services in the SC Works system.							<b>Unemployment Insurance Filing:</b> Information and assistance regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation.						
<b>Skills Assessments:</b> Initial assessment of skill levels including literacy, numeracy, English language proficiency, and aptitudes and abilities (including skills gaps).							<b>Financial Aid Assistance:</b> Assistance in establishing eligibility for financial aid programs not provided under WIOA.						
<b>Labor Exchange:</b> Job search and placement assistance, career counseling, and non-traditional employment information.							<b>Individualized Career Services:</b> Individualized services provided to eligible customers, such as counseling and career planning, to help the customer obtain or retain employment.						
<b>Partner Referrals:</b> Referrals to and coordination with programs and services within the SC Works system and other workforce programs.							<b>Access to Training Services:</b> Access to training services such as On-the-Job training, entrepreneurial, adult education and literacy, and customized training.						
<b>Provision of LMI:</b> Local, regional, and national labor market statistics including: job vacancy listings, skills needed to obtain those jobs, in-demand occupations and earnings, and advancement opportunities available.							<b>Business Services:</b> Employer services, such as job fairs, recruitment assistance, and incumbent worker training, are made available to local employers.						
<b>Provision of Performance Information:</b> Partner specific data on how local areas are performing on accountability measures relating to the area's overall SC Works system.													

Following is Attachment B from the Catawba MOU/IFA showing Catawba SC Works Partner List.

<b>SC Works Partner</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Required or Optional</b>	<b>Representing</b>
Adult, DW, Youth	Rock Hill, Lancaster, Chester	Required	Title I- WIOA
Adult Education	Scheduled visits to Rock Hill, Lancaster, Chester, York, Clover, and Fort Mill	Required	Chester Adult Ed, Lancaster Adult Ed, Rock Hill Adult Ed, Tri-District Adult Ed
Wagner Peyser	Rock Hill, Lancaster, Chester	Required	Employment services
Veteran Services	Rock Hill, Lancaster, Chester	Required	Veteran Services
TAA	Rock Hill, Lancaster, Chester	Required	Trade Adjustment Assistance
UI	Lancaster and York (pending hire)	Required	UI RESEA Program
York Technical College	Offsite	Required	Post-Secondary/Perkins
Carolina Community Actions	Scheduled visits to Rock Hill, Lancaster, Chester	Required	CSBG
Vocational Rehabilitation	Scheduled visits to Rock Hill, Lancaster, Chester	Required	The Rehabilitation Act
SC Commission for the Blind	Scheduled visits to Rock Hill, Lancaster, Chester	Required	The Rehabilitation Act
DSS - TANF	Rock Hill & Lancaster	Required	TANF
DSS – SNAP	Lancaster	Optional	SNAP
Alston Wilkes Society	Lancaster	Optional	Assistance to homeless and offender population
Catawba Indian Nation	Offsite	Required	Native American Programs
Carolina Youth Alliance	Offsite	Required	YouthBuild Programs- <b>NO LONGER IN THIS AREA</b>
Rock Hill Housing Authority	Offsite	Required	HUD Workforce Programs

Following are partner signature pages with additional information. (The heading is only included in the first one to save space.)

**THE CATAWBA WORKFORCE AREA SC WORKS SYSTEM  
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
PURSUANT TO THE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT (WIOA)**

**The South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce** is the sole entity and designated State agency responsible for administering the funds of the following:

- Employment services authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.)
- Trade Adjustment Assistance activities authorized under chapter 2 of title II of the Trade Act of 1974 (19 U.S.C. 2271 et seq.).
- Jobs for Veterans State Grants programs authorized under chapter 41 of title 38, U.S.C.
- Programs authorized under State unemployment compensation laws (in accordance with applicable Federal law).
- Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFW) programs.

**The South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department** is a designated agency specified under sec. 101(a) (2) of the Rehabilitation Act that is primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation, or vocational and other rehabilitation, of individuals with disabilities in the State and is responsible for administering or supervising policy for the Vocational Rehabilitation program, authorized under title I of the Rehabilitation Act, with the exception of Vocational Rehabilitation programs for individuals who are blind which are administered by the South Carolina Commission for the Blind.

SC Department of Vocational Rehabilitation agrees that:

- VR Rep will spend 1/2 day per week through virtual means or in the Lancaster SC Works Center
- VR Rep will spend 1/2 day every other week through virtual means or in the SC Works Chester Center
- VR Rep will spend 1/2 day per week through virtual means or in the SC Works Rock Hill Center
- Co-enrollment of appropriate participants will be encouraged when deemed in the best interest of the participant

**South Carolina Commission of the Blind** is a designated agency specified under sec. 101(a) (2) of the Rehabilitation Act for individuals who are blind.

- SC Commission of the Blind representative will spend a minimum of 4 hours per month in each SC Works Center (Chester, Lancaster and York Counties) – schedule to be coordinated with Regional Operations Center Manager and the SCCB Representative and can be accomplished virtually when conditions warrant
- SCCB Representative will facilitate onsite or through virtual sessions for SC Works team members and partner staff to share the services provided through their agency
- Co-enrollment of appropriate participants will be encouraged when deemed in the best interest of the participant

**York Technical College** represents Post-Secondary Education Programs under the Perkins Act.



Agrees to allow use of their facilities in each county for Job Fairs sponsored by the SC Works Catawba system or some other Workforce related, large scale event benefiting employers and job seekers in the Catawba Region, up to 2 times per program year with a financial benefit described below:

- In-Kind use of space at the YTC Main Campus (Rock Hill), throughout the program year, with advance coordination and careful consideration based on COVID-19 impact and CDC guidelines at that time
- In-Kind use of YTC Chester Center throughout the program year
- Space for WIOA CA on Main and Chester Campus for joint Career Pathway Ventures will also be made available
- SC Works staff will also collaborate to facilitate workshops and events on location at campuses of YTC, or through virtual means, in our Region, as scheduled and careful consideration based on COVID-19 impact and CDC guidelines at that time

**Carolina Community Actions, LLC:** Represents Community Services Block Grant Employment and Training Activity Programs. Programs available through Carolina Community Actions in the Catawba Workforce Region include the following:

- Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) Self-Sufficiency Program (formerly Family Assessment)
- CSBG Youth Leadership Program
- Head Start/Early Head Start
- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Weatherization Assistance Program

Carolina Community Actions, LLC (CCA) agrees to participate in the SC Works System in the following manner in addition to providing other appropriate services as needed:

- SC Works Lancaster: CCA staff will spend a minimum of 4 hours virtually or in the Lancaster County SC Works Center, schedule to be determined
- SC Works Rock Hill: CCA staff will spend a minimum of 4 hours virtually or in the York County SC Works Center schedule to be determined
- SC Works Chester: CCA staff will spend a minimum of 4 hours virtually or in a SC Works Center schedule to be determined
- When necessary and agreed upon by both parties, services can be provided virtually when warranted due to COVID-19.
- SC Works Outreach activities will include the provision of guidance in the SC Works Online System registration and job search guidance virtually or onsite as needed for those receiving services through CCA when arranged.

**Tri-District Adult Education (TDAE)** is a designated agency specified under Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Programs and agrees to participate in the SC Works System in the following manner in addition to providing other appropriate services as needed:

- Allow virtual meetings and workshops or use of space by WIOA Staff as scheduled
- Allow virtual access or space, up to weekly, for SC Works Express Initiative activities

- to be provided via WebEx or other virtual means or onsite
- Co-enrollment of appropriate participants will be encouraged when deemed in the best interest of the participant
- Three (3) WIOA desktop computers for use with SC Works Express Initiative, housed at the TDAE location

**Rock Hill Adult Education** is a designated agency specified under Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Programs and agrees to participate in the SC Works System in the following manner in addition to providing other appropriate services as needed:

- Rock Hill Adult Education (RHAE) Representative will coordinate a schedule to spend up to 8 hours per month in the SC Works Rock Hill Center or through virtual means and contribute in the following manner:
  - Sharing information about programs offered through Rock Hill Adult Education
  - Proctor and facilitate skills assessment in SC Works Rock Hill Center as scheduled
  - Assessment preparation and administration as needed
  - RHAE will also allow use of their Cyber Café at their location for Friday events and meetings as needed with advance scheduling, with consideration of COVID-19 impact and CDC guidelines
  - SC Works staff will also collaborate to facilitate workshops and events virtually or on location at Rock Hill Adult Education, as scheduled

**Lancaster Adult Education** is a designated agency specified under Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Programs and agrees to participate in the SC Works System in the following manner in addition to providing other appropriate services as needed:

- Lancaster Adult Education Representative will coordinate a schedule to spend 8 hours per month through virtual means or in SC Works Lancaster Center and contribute in the following manner:
  - Sharing information about programs offered through Lancaster Adult Education with job
  - Proctor and facilitate Assessments as they come available SC Works staff will also collaborate to facilitate Legacy/JET, workshops and events through virtual means or on location at Lancaster Adult Education, as scheduled

**Chester County Adult Education** is a designated agency specified under Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Programs and agrees to participate in the SC Works System in the following manner in addition to providing other appropriate services as needed:

- Chester County Adult Education Representative will coordinate a schedule to spend 4 hours per month through virtual means or in a SC Works Center and contribute in the following manner:
  - Sharing information about programs offered through Chester Adult Education with job seekers; SC Works and other partner staff, when needed
  - Proctor and facilitate assessments as they become available
  - SC Works staff will also collaborate to facilitate JET/Legacy and other workshops/events through virtual means or on location at Chester County

Adult Education, as scheduled

**Job Corps, Department of Labor** – Heritage Service Corporation, representing Job Corps Programs, agrees to participate in the SC Works System in the following manner in addition to providing other appropriate services as needed:

- By holding monthly Job Corps orientations through virtual means or in SC Works Rock Hill Center served in the Catawba Workforce Region
- Facilitating workshop/informational sessions for staff and Partners of the One-Stop System for the Catawba Region
- Job Corps will consistently spend a minimum of 4 hours per month virtually or in SC Works Rock Hill Center
- Co-enrollment of appropriate participants will be encouraged when deemed in the best interest of the participant

**The South Carolina Department of Social Services** is the sole entity and designated State agency responsible for administering the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Programs as outlined in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) providing services to residents of the Catawba Region. Signature acknowledges and agrees with the Memorandum of Understanding and attachments.

**Rock Hill Housing Authority (RHHA)** operating in York County and agrees to participate in the SC Works System in the following manner in addition to providing other appropriate services as needed:

- Dedicated RHHA Case Manager assigned and employed by RHHA to work on-site at SC Works RH (49 residents to 1 case manager): will work one-on-one with participants to guide them through the employment process and help them achieve employment-related goals
- Job search and job placement assistance
- Entrepreneurship workshops via referral to Winthrop Small Business Development Center/Gravity Center
- Work experience including On the Job Training, internships, apprenticeships, other opportunities for residents to be paid while training
- Facilitate connections to education and training
- Other supportive services as needed

**Catawba Indian Nation, Native American Programs**, agrees to participate in the SC Works System in the following manner in addition to providing other appropriate services as needed:

- By hosting a Job Fair during the course of a program year at mutually agreed upon time as appropriate based on impact of COVID-19 and applicable CDC guidelines
- Facilitating virtual or onsite workshop/informational sessions for staff and Partners of the One-Stop System for the Catawba Region, when scheduled at a mutually beneficial time as appropriate based on impact of COVID-19 and applicable CDC guidelines
- WIOA will co-enroll appropriate participants when deemed in the best interest of the participant

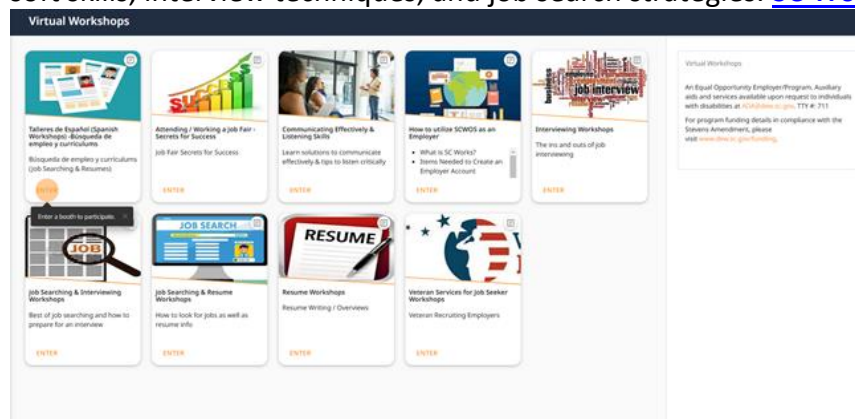
**Carolina Youth Alliance/ Youth Build Programs**, agrees to participate in the SC Works System in the following manner in addition to providing other appropriate services as needed:

- Facilitating virtual or onsite workshop/informational session for staff and Partners of the One-Stop System for the Catawba Region, when scheduled at a mutually beneficial time as appropriate based on impact of COVID-19 and applicable CDC guidelines or through the provision of information regarding Youth Build related programs in another manner
- Youth Build will have access monthly for up to 2 hours to engage in the Lancaster SC Works Center to recruit and share information about the Youth Build program and services
- WIOA will co-enroll appropriate participants when deemed in the best interest of the participant
- WIOA will provide informational sessions for Youth Build participants at mutually beneficial times as needed

**2. A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the LWDA:**

**Core Services:**

- **Eligibility Determination:** Eligibility for adult and dislocated worker services is determined based on the individual's employment history, unemployment status, income, and other criteria.
- **Job Search and Placement Assistance:** Job seekers are assisted with job search strategies, career counseling, resume writing, interview preparation, and job matching.
- **Labor Market Information:** Access to labor market data is provided to help individuals understand industry trends, wages, employment opportunities, and training requirements.
- **Referral Services:** Job seekers are referred to appropriate services, including other community or partner organizations like vocational rehabilitation or educational programs.
- **Workshops:** SC Works offices offer workshops on resume writing, job readiness, soft skills, interview techniques, and job search strategies. [SC Works Workshops](#)



### **Intensive Services:**

- **Career Counseling:** In-depth one-on-one career counseling and case management to help individuals identify career goals, overcome barriers, and develop a personalized career plan.
- **Customized Training:** Training may be customized based on employer needs and specific industries. This may include workshops, certifications, or short-term programs designed to upskill individuals.
- **Support Services:** Assistance with transportation, childcare, and other needs that may prevent individuals from participating in training or work.

### **Training Services:**

- **Classroom and Online Training:** Depending on the needs of the individual, training may include classroom-based courses, online learning, or hybrid formats. These training programs may lead to industry-recognized certifications or credentials.
- **On-the-Job Training (OJT):** Employers are encouraged to hire eligible dislocated workers and provide on-the-job training. This allows individuals to gain experience while earning a wage.
- **Occupational Skills Training:** Includes programs in fields such as healthcare, manufacturing, information technology, and skilled trades. Programs are designed to lead to employment in in-demand occupations.
- **Adult Education:** Literacy programs, GED preparation, and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes help individuals without a high school diploma or with limited English proficiency gain the skills needed for further employment.
- **Registered Apprenticeships:** Collaboration with Apprenticeship Carolina to offer formalized, industry-recognized apprenticeships that combine on-the-job learning with classroom instruction.

### **Dislocated Worker Services:**

- **Rapid Response:** Dislocated workers are provided with immediate assistance during layoffs or business closures. This includes information on available services, unemployment insurance, job search assistance, and training programs.
- **Reemployment Services:** Provides targeted assistance to laid-off workers, including job search assistance, retraining, and skills upgrading to transition back into the workforce.
- **Job Placement Services:** Services to assist dislocated workers in finding suitable employment, often with customized job matching.
- **Reemployment Assistance for Union Workers:** For dislocated union workers, there may be additional support in terms of benefits, job placement, and retraining programs.

### **Work Experience and Internships:**

- Programs offering work experience and internships help job seekers, particularly younger individuals or those with limited experience, gain valuable skills while earning wages. These programs may be targeted to specific industries or general work readiness.

### **Supportive Services:**

- In addition to training, individuals may receive support services to assist with overcoming barriers to employment, such as transportation, child care, and tools or uniforms required for specific jobs.

### Assessment of Availability and Access to Services

- **Service Availability:** The availability of services in the Catawba region and across South Carolina varies based on the needs of the local workforce. The SC Works system, with its network of career centers, offers comprehensive services for both adults and dislocated workers. The system works closely with employers to ensure that training programs align with in-demand industries and occupations.
- **Technology Utilization:** Many SC Works services are accessible online, such as job listings, training information, and career exploration tools. This allows individuals in rural or underserved areas to access services without needing to visit an office in person.
- **Collaboration with Education Providers:** Partnerships with local technical colleges, universities, and vocational schools enhance access to a wide variety of training programs. These institutions frequently offer short-term certifications, customized training, and long-term degree programs that address regional industry needs.
- **Employer Involvement:** The workforce development system engages employers to provide input into training needs, ensuring that the training provided meets the requirements of local industries. Employers also participate in providing work-based learning opportunities like OJT and apprenticeships.
- **Evaluation and Continuous Improvement:** The local workforce development boards continuously assess the effectiveness of adult and dislocated worker training programs by tracking key performance indicators such as job placement rates, completion rates of training programs, and customer satisfaction.

### Key Challenges and Areas for Improvement

- **Access to Supportive Services:** While there are many services available, some individuals may still face barriers related to transportation, childcare, or financial constraints that prevent them from fully participating in training programs. Continued improvement in providing supportive services is necessary.

- **Increasing Training Opportunities:** As the labor market evolves, ensuring that training programs keep pace with new technologies and industries is essential. Greater collaboration with employers and industry groups can help identify emerging skill needs.
- **Rural and Remote Access:** While online resources have helped expand access to services, rural areas may still face challenges related to internet access or limited local support services. More mobile or virtual solutions could help address these disparities.

**3. A description of how the LWDB will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the LWDA with statement rapid response activities:**

The Catawba Local Area’s WIOA Title I Service Provider and Wagner-Peyser (WP) staff collaborate with the State Dislocated Worker team by attending rapid response events to inform affected employees about available services. Upon receiving lists of impacted employees through WARN notices (Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification), staff reach out by mail or phone to ensure individuals are aware of the services offered through the SC Works system. Additionally, WIOA Title I and WP staff notify the State Dislocated Worker team of any anticipated layoffs or closures as soon as possible, ensuring timely service delivery both locally and statewide. For larger workforce reductions, Mobile One-Stop resources are provided on-site.

**4. A description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the LWDA, including activities for youth with disabilities, which must include an identification of successful models of such activities:**

The WIOA Title I Youth Service Provider offers a wide range of services for their participants. These include workshops, JET soft skills training, pre-employment skills training, mentoring, assistance with obtaining GED/high school diploma, work-based learning, occupational skills training, transportation assistance, childcare assistance, etc.

Identification of some of Catawba Local Area’s successful programs and activities include:

- The WIOA Title I Service Provider’s pre-employment skills training program, Design Your Future, is tailored to young adults, 17 to 24 years old. The program walks the job seeker through designing their own career pathway. The modules include Financial Literacy, Entrepreneurship, Study Skills, Leadership Development, Training, College Planning, Resume Development, Mock Interview, Mentorship, and Career Advisement.
- JET (Job Endurance Training) curriculum and 12-hour soft skills program is also a successful program which can be tailored to Youth participants.
- The Academy and Metrix Learning are proving to be successful tools in providing self-paced learning modules and courses that can help hone a job seeker’s skills and prepare them for their training path or their path to securing sustainable employment.

While these services have been successful, we are working to improve our processes and the delivery of our services by assessing the relevance and effectiveness of the tools we use. Workshops, JET, and pre-employment skills training (groups or one-on-one) are

evaluated at least quarterly by WIOA Title I staff to be sure that content is current and relevant to the needs of employers. One addition is a workshop titled “Interviewing Tips: Virtual vs. In- person” to prepare job seekers for the current environment. We have effective working relationships with all our Adult Ed centers, and this allows for easy referrals and communication regarding participants. It was determined by Adult Ed and WIOA staff that there should be more access to youth staff for Adult Ed participants to make it easier for the participant to connect with their case manager. Prior to the pandemic, we had youth provider staff on-site weekly at our Adult Ed Centers to provide easy access for referrals, workshops, etc. While we have obtained some high- level work experiences to match participants’ interests, we have many opportunities for participants to gain basic work skills for those that lack work experience. Our WIOA Title I Service Provider works to create these opportunities and align them with the career goals of the participants. We continue to learn more about how we can use Artificial Intelligence (AI) can assist with researching companies and preparing resumes, cover letters, and other communication with the businesses.

Our WIOA Title I Youth Service Provider partners with Vocational Rehabilitation in each county to best assist youth with disabilities through potential co-enrollment. We have also held Youth staff meetings at Vocational Rehabilitation and have had speakers from Catawba Mental Health to further the understanding of available services and partnership with these agencies. This has helped to improve communication between staff members regarding services and referrals.

Additionally, our WIOA Title I Youth Service Providers partner with Adult Education, DJJ, DSS and others to serve youth with barriers to employment. There is also a referral system in place with DJJ and DSS. These have been great steps toward serving more youth with barriers.

Transportation reimbursement and childcare assistance are especially valuable services for WIOA Title I Youth participants. We currently reimburse for transportation, based on mileage, and pay a flat fee per day/week for childcare. Transportation is a huge barrier in our area because there is limited public transportation outside the City of Rock Hill. We have “on-demand” transit in Lancaster, Chester and York Counties, and riders must schedule days in advance. Rock Hill has a free bus service that has routes around the city with stops at York Tech, near the Rock Hill SC Works Center, mall areas, hospital, etc. Taxis are costlier, therefore, making them a poor option. The Catawba area will continue to seek solutions to the ongoing transportation issue for our participants by working with the COG and other entities to improve the transportation options by pursuing grants and other available resources such as Uber and Lyft. Little progress has been made in this area due to lack of ridership to support the funding for mass transit. Along with budget constraints, we also see geographic challenges such as dispersed populations and infrastructure limitations. Rural communities in SC are often spread out, making it difficult to design and implement cost-effective transportation systems that serve all areas. Many rural areas have aging



infrastructure, such as narrow roads or bridges in disrepair, that complicate efforts to expand or enhance transportation networks.

**5. A description of how the fourteen youth program elements are integrated in program design, including a description of partnerships which identifies the entities involved and the function(s) they are providing, and a description of formalized agreements in place for the provision of program elements not provided by the local program.**

Catawba's WIOA Title I Youth Service Providers incorporate the 14 Youth Elements in the following ways.

- 1) **Tutoring:** Adult Education Centers provide tutoring and study skills training to youth as needed for both GED and occupational skills training. Aside from Adult Education we utilize retired school teachers and hire them as tutors for our participants.
- 2) **Alternative Secondary School Recovery Services:** This can be accomplished by utilizing our online resources; The Academy, GED Academy, and "in-person" tutoring.
- 3) **Occupational Skills Training:** Youth assessed as needing further training are referred to short term occupational skills training, through our Eligible Training Providers, based on participant interests.
- 4) **Work Experience:** Work based learning opportunities (Work Experience (WEX) & On-the- Job (OJT)) are available to Youth who have completed career readiness training. These opportunities are created based on participant career interests and employer availability.
- 5) **Concurrent Education & Training:** These opportunities can be paid or unpaid and will provide academic and occupational education components (OST & OJT).
- 6) **Leadership Development:** Leadership development opportunities are also focused on Job Readiness training through our in-house Design Your Future (DYF) curriculum combined with Job Endurance Training (JET) for additional soft skills.
- 7) **Supportive Services:** Supportive Services are provided to those in need of childcare, transportation, tools, or any other training or work-related expenses.
- 8) **Mentoring:** When applicable, adult mentoring can be established by partnering a youth with an available mentor for additional support. Work based learning has shown to be an excellent resource for mentorship between the employer/staff and the WIOA participants.
- 9) **Follow Up Services:** These services are provided for a year following WIOA exit of young adults. Our service provider's Retention Coordinator develops and maintains a relationship with those exiting but keeping the lines of communication open and advising that some supportive services are available during this period. This continued engagement also allows for the provision of encouragement and support for those continuing in post-secondary training and employment placements, when applicable.
- 10) **Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling:** Talent Engagement and Career Advisors counsel and provide one-on-one guidance to participants for many obstacles their participants may face. When more professional intervention for drug and alcohol counseling is needed, we work with partners such as Vocational Rehabilitation, Keystone, 6<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Circuits Drug Court, and other programs with this focus. When we encounter a participant that may need therapy or mental health counseling, we

partner with our Mental Health providers in each county, NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness), and other mental health service providers throughout our region. Referrals, with scheduled appointments for assessment by these professionals are coordinated when possible. This process has been impacted by limited in person services due to the pandemic which leads to some services being offered in a virtual manner by these providers.

- 11) **Financial Literacy:** We partner with local credit unions like Founders Federal Credit Union to facilitate financial simulations and also make referrals through SC Works Online Services (SCWOS), referral forms, and/or phone calls to other partner agencies as needed for more support with financial literacy.
- 12) **Entrepreneurial Skills Training:** Partnership and referrals to Winthrop Small Business Development Center, business/entrepreneurial courses through the WIOA Title I Service Provider's *The Academy*; courses through Metrix.
- 13) **Labor Market Information:** Labor market information and other information about in-demand industries or occupations is provided to all participants from South Carolina Works Online Services (<https://jobs.scworks.org>) and O\*NET online ([www.onetonline.org](http://www.onetonline.org)).
- 14) **Activities for transition to post-secondary education and training:** Additional services offered congruent with workforce preparation include education services (GED and/or occupational skills training), additional supportive services (childcare payment, transportation reimbursement, etc.), financial literacy education, and preparation activities for transition to post-secondary education and training.

6. **If using the basic skills deficient definition contained in WIOA § 3(5)(B), describe the LWDA's policy that further defines how to determine if a youth 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. (If the LWDA continues to use TABE for determining youth basic skills deficiency, a local policy is not required.)**

The Catawba Local Area continues to use TABE.

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

Communication is the key to developing strategies to avoid duplication of services. Some of those strategies include the WIOA COG staff, WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth staff meeting which occurs every other month with our Adult Ed directors. During these meetings, ways to leverage our resources are often discussed and career pathways are explored. An example of this is when a WIOA participant is pursuing their GED and Adult education offers dual enrollment with York Tech for the initial stackable credential that may not be a WIOA approved option. At that point, the participant has earned their GED and an initial credential. The participant may now be ready to pursue the next level and WIOA may be able to assist with that stackable credential if it is an option in SCPATH. In keeping with the State's Workforce Innovation Committee Priorities, the partners will

discuss innovative ways to increase awareness of career pathways in K-12, especially with WIOA Title I Youth Participants.

WIOA COG staff are also routinely in contact with our major training providers as needed to discuss new programs, changes in programs, etc. Program managers and case management staff are also in contact with training providers of their participants. COG staff and the WIOA Title I Service Provider management have an effective working relationship with our training providers allowing for the development of needed curriculum based on employer need and job seeker skills gap. Providers have also worked with us to facilitate off schedule courses specific to WIOA participant demand if an adequate number of participants need the course. We will also explore options for job specific training as the needs of our area employers change. We will increase our efforts to provide supportive services for students that are WIOA eligible, but their tuition is paid from another source by offering to pay for books, tools, and other supportive services.

**8. A description of how the LWDB will coordinate the WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with the provision of transportation, childcare, and other appropriate supportive services in the LWDA.**

The Catawba Workforce Development Board has established updated goals including *improving education and workforce infrastructure network to decrease barriers to work in order to increase attraction, recruitment, and retention necessary to maintain economic development competitiveness critical to the growth of high wage, growth, demand, mobility/retention of jobs*. One strategy is to tackle this goal by increasing awareness of resources to mitigate obstacles to employment. The Board's action to implement the strategy is to collect and distribute a catalog of promising practices and models for removing obstacles, primary related to transportation, childcare, and housing.

The City of Rock Hill has a free transit service. The routes include stops near SC Works Rock Hill, York Technical College, downtown, hospital, shopping areas, grocery stores and other key locations.

We are also collaborating with area housing authorities to provide options for those we serve that may not be in a stable living situation. This is a barrier that usually must be addressed before full attention can be given to the development of a career with sustainable wages. For some of our hardest to serve participants, and those exiting the foster care or justice systems, obtaining their vital records is usually the first barrier they encounter. We partner with Alston Wilkes Society to help guide these priority populations through this process so that they will be ready for their next steps.

Provision of transportation, childcare, and other appropriate supportive services are based on need and the availability of funds. Career Advisors look for other resources before using WIOA funds. We work with students that receive tuition/books through other sources (PELL, Lottery, SCVRD paid training, DSS paid training, various scholarships/grants, etc.) and provide transportation, childcare, testing fees, and other supportive services as needed.

We currently reimburse for transportation, based on mileage, and pay a flat fee per day/week for childcare. Transportation is a huge barrier in rural portions of our area because there is limited public transportation. We have “on-demand” transit in Chester, Lancaster, and York Counties and riders must schedule days in advance. Rock Hill now has a free bus service that has routes around the city with stops at York Tech, near the Rock Hill SC Works Center, mall areas, hospital, etc. Taxis are costlier, therefore, not the best choice.

Current partners that provide information relating to the availability of support services such as child care and transportation that referrals can be made as needed include: WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs; Rehabilitation Programs for Individuals with Disabilities; Trade Adjustment Assistance; and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. We also coordinate with community-based organizations including Carolina Community Actions and when appropriate with faith-based organizations.

Coordination of the delivery of supportive services takes place during and in between the quarterly partner meetings. The Memorandum of Understanding has referrals processes agreed on by the partners to ensure supportive services are leveraged across partner agencies to help provide wrap-around services that assist individuals get and stay in training and/or get and keep a job.

**9. 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 SC Works delivery system.**

The Catawba Local Area One-Stop Operator coordinates meetings to discuss integration of activities and service delivery flow within the SC Works centers at a minimum of once per quarter. The referral process is being followed to ensure smooth transition while delivering career services to job seekers based on their individual level of need. The Regional Director for WP services is invited to participate in monthly management meetings with the WIOA Title I Service Provider/One-Stop Operator Leadership Team to ensure consistency of service delivery. Catawba WP/WIOA Business Solutions Team members meet monthly, and the full Catawba Business Solutions Team (including partners) meets quarterly. They also meet more frequently as job fairs are being planned. Again, communication is key in planning and delivering non-duplicative services.

**10. A description of how the LWDB will coordinate the WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities under WIOA Title II, including how the LWDB will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II consistent with WIOA requirements.**

In the Catawba Area, we have always had an effective relationship between WIOA Title I and WIOA, Title II: Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), but it has been strengthened over the last couple of few years through bi-monthly meetings. COG WIOA staff coordinate and facilitate these meetings with Adult Education Directors, representatives from the Equus A/DW program and Youth program. Meetings have been

held at different locations to share program facilities and program offerings to clients. Attendees agree that these meetings have proven to be greatly beneficial as processes are discussed and established as a result of the committee meetings. Meeting in person helps to “put faces with names” and has improved communication. We also have a successful referral process. Youth staff have designated space in three of our four Adult Ed Centers (not enough space in the fourth, but they are in close proximity to the SC Works Center and Youth office). WIOA covers all costs for the attainment of a GED or high school diploma.

Adult Ed provided the following process for WIOA review of Adult Ed Proposals:

***Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB)***  
**Adult Education Proposal Review Process**

- Notification will be sent to Board Chairs with a cc: Admins to include the following:
  - Information on the upcoming Adult Education RFP and WIOA requirements for LWDB’s review of proposals
  - Outline of the proposal review process and timeline.
- RFP to be released.
- Eligible providers (potential grantees) to submit Letter of Intent. *This will allow us to gauge the number of proposals to expect.*
  - The amount of time it takes to review proposals will depend on the number of proposals received in each LWDA.
- LWDB Proposal Review Training will be held via live webinar.
  - During the webinar, LWDB members will be provided with an overview of the proposals, instructions on how to review proposals, and how to use the proposal review rubric. LWDB members will have an opportunity to ask questions during the webinar. A webinar playback option will be available.
  - A point of contact will be available during the review process to answer questions and to clarify any information.
  - Any LWDB members with potential conflicts of interest should recuse themselves from the review process. For example, technical college representatives should not review any proposals if a technical college within their area submits a proposal.
- Upon receipt of all grant applications, SCDE - Office of Adult Education staff will screen all applications to determine eligibility to apply for funds. All applications deemed eligible will be sorted by their LWDA and packaged for hard-copy or electronic transmittal to the Board Chair and LWDA Administrator. The package also will include the rubric and review instructions.
- Board members will use the rubric to review each proposal for alignment with their Local Plan.
- Once the review process is complete, all forms and other supporting documentation will be forwarded to the Office of Adult Education for consideration in the grant competition process.
- SCDE - Office of Adult Education staff will review LWDB comments and feedback on

Local Plan and one-stop alignment and consider the results of the review.

**11. A description of how the LWDB will coordinate with partner programs to conduct affirmative outreach to include members of groups protected by the Equal Opportunity provisions of WIOA § 188, including individuals of various religions, racial and ethnic backgrounds, individuals of limited English proficiency, individuals with disabilities, and individuals of different age groups and sexes.**

The Catawba Workforce Development Board is committed to serving all people in our area. The Priority Populations Committee has been very active in spearheading initiatives to help us reach all demographics. This has included partnering with Able SC to host events for employers to share the benefits of hiring employees with disabilities and the many services available for those employees.

We have increased our partnerships with a myriad of area faith-based organizations like . These organizations receive our SC Works Partner Blasts and are invited to participate in our partner meetings and other SC Works sponsored events. We have also taken part in community events sponsored by various faith-based organizations by setting up informational booths and sharing SC Works related services with those in attendance. We work closely with several organizations with a focus on individuals that have experienced varying states of homelessness. SC Works Catawba hopes to play a critical role as they work to regain stability which often begins with an employment opportunity once their basic needs are being met.

See the Community Partners Resource Lists below for all 3 counties that include our faith-based partners.

# SC WORKS

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COMMUNITY  
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# RESOURCE GUIDE

CHESTER COUNTY

### Seeking Employment (Adults and Youth):

- Chester SC Works Center- (803) 377-8147
- SC Commission of the Blind- (803) 898-8822

### 55 and Older Seeking Employment:

- Goodwill Industries- (704) 756-1089

### Education:

- York Technical College (Chester Campus)- (803) 385-5884
- Chester County First Steps- (803) 385-6174
- Chester Adult Education- (803) 581-9324
- Chester County School District- (803) 385-6122

### Transportation Needs:

- Chester Connector- (803) 385-3838

### Computer Access:

- Chester SC Works Chester- (803) 377-8147
- Chester County Library- (803) 377-8145

### Miscellaneous Services:

- Christ Central- (803) 377-6339
- The Dove's Nest- (803) 581-0219
- Tender Hearts- (803) 627-1969
- Chester Mission Station- (803) 581-5890
- Battered But Not Broken- (803) 385-2290

### Shelter Assistance

- Christ Central Chester Center of Hope- (803) 581-5890

### Substance Abuse Assistance

- Hazel Pittman Center- (803) 377-8111
- Christian Home for Men

### Emergency Assistance

- Carolina Community Actions- (803) 385-5205
- GRASP- (803) 482-4407  
(Servicing Great Falls Only)

### Food Assistance

- Purity Presbyterian Church- (803) 377-8175
- Department of Social Services- (803) 377-8131
- The Turning Point- (803) 379-0888

### Health Assistance

- Good Samaritan Medical Clinic- (803) 385-6332
- Chester County Health Department- (803) 636-5333
- WelVista- (800) 983-3339
- North Central Family Medicine- (803) 581-0574
- Affinity Health Care- (803) 909-6363  
(Located in Rock Hill)

### Housing Assistance

- Chester Housing Authority- (803) 581-6981

### Mental Health Assistance

- Catawba Community Mental Health Center- (803) 581-8311
- NAMI- (803) 762-9165

### Veterans' Assistance

- Veterans' Affairs- (803) 385-6157
- Alston Wilkes Society- (803) 984-0418
- SC Department of Employment and Workforce- (803) 377-8147

### SC WORKS CHESTER OFFICE

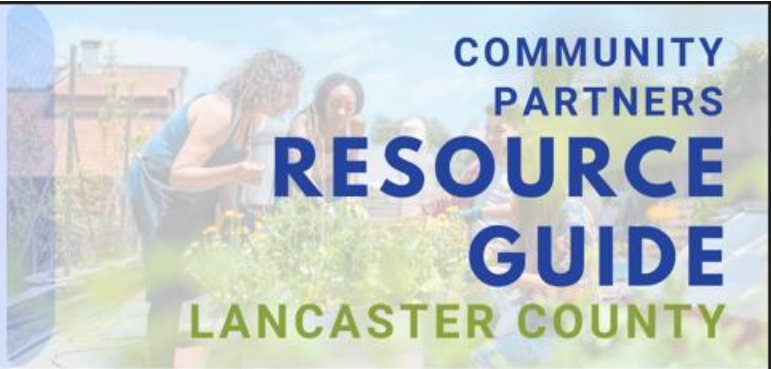
598 SALUDA ROAD, CHESTER, SC 29706 PHONE: (803) 377-8147

An Equal Opportunity Employer/Program. Auxiliary aids and services available upon request to individuals with disabilities. TTY: Relay Services Dial 711  
For program funding details in compliance with the Stevens Amendment, please visit [https://scworkscatawba.com/stevens\\_amendment.asp](https://scworkscatawba.com/stevens_amendment.asp)

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## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

# RESOURCE GUIDE

## LANCASTER COUNTY

### Seeking Employment (Adults and Youth):

- Lancaster SC Works Center- (803) 285-6966
- SC Commission of the Blind- (803) 650-5106

### 55 and Older Seeking Employment:

- Goodwill Industries- (704) 756-1089

### Education:

- Lancaster Adult Education- (803) 285-7660
- University of South Carolina Lancaster- (803) 313-7000
- Partners for Youth- (803) 286-1465
- Lancaster County First Steps- (803) 286- 8000

### Transportation Needs:

- Lancaster Area Ride Service- (803) 285-6956
- Lancaster County Council on Aging, Inc- (803) 285-6956

### Computer Access:

- Lancaster SC Works Center- (803) 285-6966
- Lancaster County Library (Main Branch)- (803) 285-1502

### Miscellaneous Services:

- Hope of Lancaster- (803) 286-4673
- Christian Services- (803) 320-0268
- Palmetto Citizens Against Sexual Assault- (803) 286-8000
- United Way of Lancaster- (803) 285-7660

### Shelter Assistance

- Christ Central Chester Center of Hope- (803) 581-5890

### Substance Abuse Assistance:

- Counseling Services of Lancaster- (803) 285-6911
- House of Pearls- (803) 289-7089

### Emergency Assistance

- Carolina Community Actions- (803) 285-2034
- Hope of Lancaster- (803) 286-4673

### Food Assistance

- Christian Services- (803) 320-0268
- Department of Social Services- (803) 286-6914

### Health Assistance

- Lancaster County Public Health Department- (803) 286-9948
- Plexus Health Lancaster- (803) 285-2273
- Affinity Health Care- (803) 909-6363 (Located in Rock Hill)
- Welvista- (803) 933-9183

### Housing Assistance

- Habitat for Humanity of Lancaster County- (803) 283-1203
- Lancaster's Children's Home- (803) 286-5277

### Mental Health Assistance

- SC Department of Mental Health- (803) 285-7456
- NAMI- (803) 762-9165

### Veterans' Assistance

- Alston Wilkes- (803) 288-0794
- SC Department of Veterans' Affairs- (803) 283-2469
- SC Department of Workforce and Employment- (803) 285-6966

### SC WORKS LANCASTER OFFICE

705 N. WHITE STREET, LANCASTER, SC 29720 PHONE: (803) 285-6966

An Equal Opportunity Employer/Program. Auxiliary aids and services available upon request to individuals with disabilities. TTY: Relay Services Dial 711  
For program funding details in compliance with the Stevens Amendment, please visit [https://scworkscatawba.com/stevens\\_amendment.asp](https://scworkscatawba.com/stevens_amendment.asp)



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YORK COUNTY

### Seeking Employment (Adults and Youth):

- Rock Hill SC Works Center- (803) 803-328-3881
- SC Vocational Rehabilitation- (803) 327-7106
- SC Commission of the Blind- (803) 650-5106

### 55 and Older Seeking Employment:

- Goodwill Industries- (704) 756-1089

### Education:

- Rock Hill Adult Education- (803) 981-1375
- Tri-County Adult Education- (803) 810-8440
- York Technical College- (803) 327-8000
- York County First Steps- (803) 981-5780

### Transportation Needs:

- My Ride Transit- (803) 329-7433
- York County Access- (803) 327-6694

### Computer Access:

- Rock Hill SC Works Center- (803) 328-3881
- York County Library (Main Branch)- (803) 981- 5858

### Miscellaneous Services:

- Better Bound Book Store and Youth Development Corporation- (803) 981-9011
- Fullife Hope Center- (839) 500-3387
- Sisters United as One- (803) 554-5434
- United Way of York County- (803) 324-2735

### Shelter Assistance

- Pathways Community Center- (803) 366-7284
- Pilgrims Inn- (803) 327-4427
- Family Promise of York County- (803) 329-2456
- The Life House Women's Shelter- (803) 598-0476

### Substance Abuse Assistance:

- Keystone Substance Abuse Services- (803) 324-1800
- Serenity Club of York County- (803) 366-8950

### Emergency Assistance

- Carolina Community Actions- (803) 366-5537
- Hope of Rock Hill- (803) 328-8000
- The Salvation Army of Rock Hill- (803) 324-5141

### Food Assistance

- Heavenly Food Pantry- (803) 328-6632
- Department of Social Services- (803) 909-7446
- Pilgrim's Inn- (803) 327-4227

### Health Assistance

- York County Public Health Department- (803) 909-7300
- Welvista- (803) 933-9183
- Affinity Health Care- (803) 909-6363
- Palmetto Community Health Care- (803) 366-6337

### Housing Assistance

- Habitat for Humanity of York County- (803)
- Rock Hill Housing Authority- (803) 324-6350
- York Housing Authority- (803) 684-7359

### Mental Health Assistance

- SC Department of Mental Health- (803) 327-2012
- NAMI- (803) 610-8174

### Veterans' Assistance

- Alston Wilkes- (803) 288-0794
- SC Department of Veterans' Affairs- (803) 909-7525
- SC Department of Workforce and Employment- (803) 328-3881

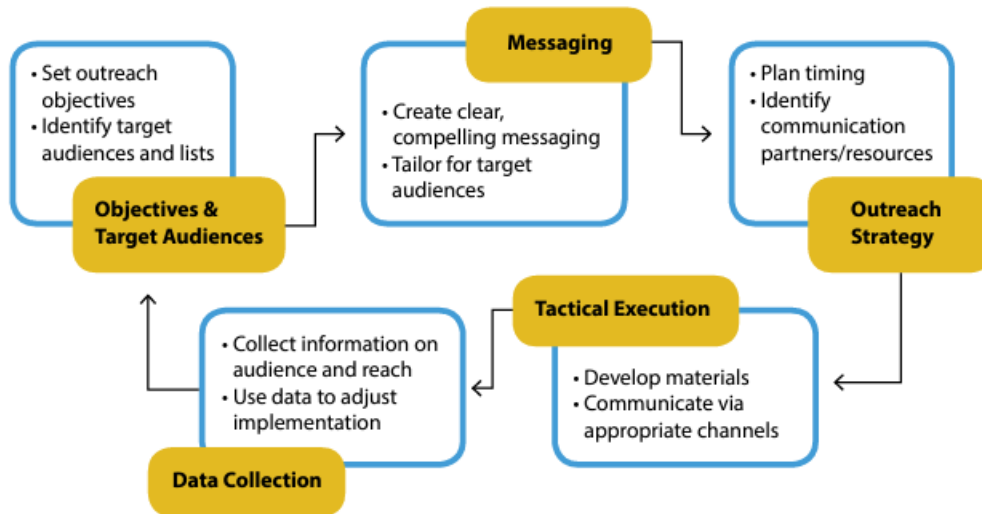
## SC WORKS ROCK HILL OFFICE

454 S. ANDERSON ROAD SUITE 202, ROCK HILL, SC 29730 PHONE: (803) 328-3881

An Equal Opportunity Employer/Program. Auxiliary aids and services available upon request to individuals with disabilities. TTY: Relay Services Dial 711  
For program funding details in compliance with the Stevens Amendment, please visit [https://scworkscatawba.com/stevens\\_amendment.asp](https://scworkscatawba.com/stevens_amendment.asp)

We join efforts with our Adult Education partners to work with individuals with English as their second language. There have been some awesome success stories by combining our efforts and identifying employment opportunities that were great fits as they continued to work on English proficiency. With the addition of a bilingual staff person to facilitate, we plan to broaden our outreach this year in order to increase our

work with the ESL population in our area.



SOURCE: Walter, F., Torres, A., Aldebot-Green, A. (2015). Elevating Quality Rating and Improvement System Communications: How to Improve Outreach to and Engagement with Providers, Parents, Policymakers, and the Public. Bethesda, MD: Child Trends.

Over the past few years, we have also strengthened our relationship with Catawba Indian Nation, the only federally recognized tribe in SC. We have enrolled and worked with several individuals through our Youth program and will continue to recruit and make WIOA services available. Through this partnership, we have hosted job fairs the last few years at the Reservation and we will continue to do so on an annual basis.

## Section V: Operations and Compliance

- 1. Copies of executed cooperative agreements which define 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 SC Works system. This includes agreements between the LWDB or other local entities with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities, such as the cross-training of staff, technical assistance, the use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination.**

Detailed Memorandum of Understanding agreements are in place with partners and specify the minimum level at which we will partner to ensure integration and the optimal delivery of workforce related services. Partners with a focus on the employment needs of individuals with disabilities have hosted informational sessions for the staff located within each SC Works Center throughout the Catawba area. We are collaborating to share our services with employers, spotlighting services and potential work accommodations that can be designed to encourage employment of those individuals with disabilities. Partner meetings are hosted by SC Works quarterly in the Catawba area through Zoom, in person, or a hybrid. These meetings help us avoid duplication of services. One partner at each meeting does a “partner spotlight” segment to detail the services they offer. This helps other agencies in attendance learn about additional services available for their clients. This has been an effective way for partners to collaborate to better serve customers. Partner

meetings have been held as a part of a company tour for those in attendance to learn about the company and hiring needs. Job fairs are a collaborative event between SC Works staff and partner staff, rotate quarterly between counties, and include a partner section so job seekers can learn about their services. SC Works staff have been and will continue to be trained on the basic services offered by all partners.

**2. A description of the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds as determined by the CEO(s).**

**Catawba Regional Council of Governments (COG)** is an association of South Carolina local governments in Chester, Lancaster, Union, and York counties. The COG serves as a forum for intergovernmental cooperation and as a central staffing resource for grantsmanship, land use and transportation planning, community and economic development, workforce development, GIS mapping, information systems, and project management. (Note – the Catawba WIOA Area only consists of Chester, Lancaster, and York Counties. Union County is part of the Upstate WIOA Area.)

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

Catawba follows the same process for each Request for Proposal (RFP). We maintain a potential bidder list that consists of current contractors, previous contractors, and contractors that have asked to be added to the list. We do not remove contractors from this list unless they request it. Prior to releasing an RFP, WIOA COG staff sends letters and/or emails to potential bidders telling them about the RFP. We also post legal notices in each local newspaper. The RFP is posted to our website, and we also will email or mail copies to interested bidders. The most RFP cycles, we have held our bidders conference by email. Potential bidders submit questions by a certain date, and all questions and answers are posted to our website. Proposals must be received at the COG by the deadline and are logged in when received. The bidder is also given/sent a receipt showing date and the time bid was received. Three non-WIOA COG staff members open the bids and verify that each bid meets criteria (signed, proper number copies, etc.). This is verified on a form for each bid.

The Catawba Workforce Development Board Executive Committee and/or the Youth Review Committee meets to discuss and score each bid. This is documented on a form for each bid by each committee member. WIOA COG staff averages total scores to determine if bids meet minimum criteria. The committee then determines the program(s) to fund and recommends funding amounts for each. These recommendations are taken to the Youth Committee and/or WDB for approval. After approval, all bidders are notified of the results.

**4. A description of agreed upon local performance goals.**

**Catawba Program Year 2024 and 2025 WIOA Negotiated Performance Goals**

<b>WIOA TITLE I – ADULT</b>	<b>Program Year 2024 Goal</b>	<b>Program Year 2025 Goal</b>
Employment Rate 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit	82.5%	82.5%
Employment Rate 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter After Exit	80.6%	80.6%
Median Earnings in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit	\$7,390	\$7,390
Credential Attainment Rate	65.4%	66.7%
Measurable Skill Gains	68.0%	68.0%
<b>WIOA TITLE I – DISLOCATED WORKER</b>		
Employment Rate 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit	88.8%	88.8%
Employment Rate 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter After Exit	87.5%	87.5%
Median Earnings in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit	\$8,742	\$8,742
Credential Attainment Rate	69.1%	69.6%
Measurable Skill Gains	68.1%	68.1%
<b>WIOA TITLE I – YOUTH</b>		
Education or Training Activities or Employment in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit	81.0%	81.0%
Education or Training Activities or Employment in the 4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter After Exit	80.8%	81.0%
Median Earnings in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarter After Exit	\$4,800	\$4,800
Credential Attainment Rate	55.1%	55.1%
Measurable Skill Gains	65.0%	65.0%

**5. A description of actions the LWDB will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing workforce area, including the following:**

- **The effectiveness and continuous improvement criteria the LWDB will implement to assess their one-stop centers.**
- **A description of fiscal and program performance goals beyond the federal measures and how progress will be tracked and made publicly available.**
- **A description of the methodology used by the LWDB to allocate SC Works center infrastructure funds.**
- **A description of the roles and contributions of SC Works partners, including cost allocation.**

The Catawba Workforce Development Board’s strategic plan goals, along with the actions contained in the plan, will continue to keep the Catawba Local Area on track to remain a high-performing workforce area.

We require additional goals for the WIOA Title I Service Provider to earn profit and those goals help the Catawba area continuously improve. The Catawba Workforce Development

Board Executive Committee reviews the goals at the beginning of each program year and then they are approved by the WDB. The profit goals are included in the statements of work. In order to meet the State Fund Utilization Rate of 70% spending, the WIOA Title I Service Provider is required to spend 90% of their Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth budgets. To meet the state goal of 30% Direct Participant Cost Rate, The WIOA Title I Service Provider is required to spend 35% of A/DW funds on participant costs. To meet the Federal goal of 20% expended on work-based learning, the WIOA Title I Service Provider is required to spend 25% of Youth funds on work-based learning. 70% of all enrolled adult participants must be either low-income (to include public assistance recipients) or basic skills deficient. We have staff capture all applicable priority of service categories to reflect efforts in serving those most in need and they are recorded in SCWOS. This is tracked using the Adhoc/Aggregate report – ‘Adult Priority of Service –Select PY’ to keep track of % and type/s documented.

We plan to continue to use the SC Works Certification Standards. Also, COG WOIA staff monitors the SC Works Centers annually; the WIOA Title I Service Provider internal “Quality Measurement Tool” reviews are conducted quarterly, and an external review is conducted annually at a minimum. The WIOA Title I service provider internal process improvement committee meets and assesses services to ensure continuous improvement. The Catawba Workforce Development Board One Stop Committee receives feedback and bi-monthly meets to consider ways to improve the SC Works Centers.

In order to cover the infrastructure costs of the SC Works Centers in Catawba, we are using “full time equivalent” (FTEs). This means that each full-time staff person has their time assigned to each office in which they work and shares costs accordingly. Please see the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), including the Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) Budget (attached).

The utmost goal of all staff in the SC Works centers is to provide the best possible service to customers. Staff are trained to greet customers and can guide them to the many services available from various partners. Roles and contributions are specified in detail in the local MOU and Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA). Some contributions are monetary, and some are “in kind”.

Additionally, Equus is required to spend 35% of A/DW funds on participant costs and 25% of Youth funds on work-based learning. They are also required to spend 90% of their budgets each program year. Progress is tracked by financial and SCWOS reports, and are shared with the Youth Council and Workforce Development Board.

The following comes directly form the MOU/IFA.

Each partner agrees to provide the resources necessary to fund their proportionate share of the costs as contained in Attachment E, Shared Operating Budget. The IFA should include, but is not limited to the following infrastructure cost items:

- Lease/Rent
- Utilities
- Landscaping
- Janitorial and cleaning maintenance
- Building maintenance and repairs
- HVAC maintenance
- Equipment rental expenses
- Security System
- Pest Control
- Supplies (public access and common spaces only)

The Parties may also share other costs that support the operations of the centers, as well as the costs of shared services that are authorized for and may be commonly provided through the SC Works partner programs to any individual, such as initial intake, assessment of needs, identification of appropriate services to meet such needs, evaluation of basic skills, referrals to other partners, and business services. The Parties have agreed to cost share in the following additional shared services and estimated costs as in the attached Shared Operating Budget. Final costs for all agreed upon additional shared services will be presented and approved by the Parties prior to actual purchase or procurement of services. Failure to do so may result in disputed charges and a refusal to submit payment.

**6. A description of how adult and dislocated worker training services will be provided through the use of individual training accounts (ITAs), including the following:**

- **If contracts for training services will be used.**
- **How the use of training service contracts will be coordinated with the use of ITAs.**
- **How the LWDB will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided.**

We generally do not use contracts for training services with training providers. We have only used a contract for a pilot program for one session of Certified Manufacturing Technician training program.

Training budgets are developed in the SCWOS Advanced Individual Fund Tracking (AIFT) system for programs appearing on the local approved ETPL. Scholarship applications are completed by WIOA participants interested in training and as a part of that process, training costs are gathered from the prospective training provider and the individual training account is based on that information.

Participants identified to need further training are provided with LMI and other data about “in-demand” jobs. They are also provided with information about training programs in our area. Case management staff help guide the participants in making their training choice.

Training choice is supported when indicators, My Next Move, Career Pathway Explorer, and the completion of labor market information) for the field of study supports their choice. This includes it being within the industry sectors supported by the Catawba area and the likelihood of the ability to be successful in the chosen field. These criteria are thoroughly discussed and documented with the WIOA participant.

- 7. A description of the process used by the LWDB to provide a minimum 10 business day public comment period prior to submission of the plan, including an opportunity to have input into the development of the local plan, particularly for representatives of LWDA businesses, labor organizations, and institutions of education.**

The Catawba Area will gather input from as many sources as possible. We will share the drafted Local Plan and Regional plan through email with the Catawba Workforce Development Board and committees (which include employers, SCVRD, DSS, WP, labor representatives, other partners, economic development, providers, etc.), County Councils and CEOs, and Adult Ed directors for input. Once approved by the Catawba WDB, the Local Plan and Regional Plans will be posted on the Catawba Regional Council of Government's (COG) website and the SCWorks Catawba website along with instructions for comment.

- 8. A description of how the LWDA SC Works centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and by SC Works partners.**

The Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) SC Works centers are actively transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system to streamline service delivery across programs under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and partner organizations. This system enhances coordination and ensures a seamless experience for job seekers and employers.

The implementation process includes:

- 1. Adopting Statewide Systems:** SC Works centers are aligning with the state's case management platform, which consolidates data from multiple programs into a centralized system. This integration improves data sharing, reduces duplication, and facilitates more efficient service delivery.
- 2. Cross-Training Staff:** Comprehensive training sessions are conducted for SC Works staff and partner agencies to familiarize them with the new system. This includes modules on system navigation, data input protocols, and reporting capabilities to ensure consistent and effective use of the technology.
- 3. Streamlining Intake Processes:** The new system supports a unified intake process, allowing job seekers to complete a single application for multiple programs and services. This reduces administrative burdens and accelerates access to training, employment, and supportive services.

4. **Enhanced Case Management:** Case managers can now track participants' progress in real-time, monitor outcomes, and coordinate efforts across programs more effectively. The system's advanced reporting tools provide valuable insights to guide decision-making and resource allocation.
5. **Technology Integration with Partners:** SC Works centers are working closely with partner organizations to ensure compatibility and data-sharing capabilities. This fosters a more collaborative approach to workforce development and improves service alignment.
6. **Ongoing Evaluation and Upgrades:** To maintain system efficiency, the LWDA regularly evaluates the platform's performance and solicits feedback from users. Updates and enhancements are made to address emerging needs and technological advancements.

By transitioning to this integrated, technology-enabled system, SC Works centers in the LWDA are improving their ability to serve customers, enhance partnerships, and achieve better workforce outcomes.

## 9. A description of how the LWDB ensures compliance with the adult priority of service requirements under WIOA Title I.

The Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) ensures strict compliance with the adult priority of service requirements under WIOA Title I by implementing robust policies, procedures, and monitoring systems that prioritize services for specific populations. The following strategies are employed to uphold this mandate:

### Policy Development and Communication

- **Priority Framework:** The LWDB establishes and disseminates clear policies prioritizing services for individuals who are:
  - Recipients of public assistance.
  - Classified as low-income individuals.
  - Basic skills deficient.
- **Policy Training:** Staff at SC Works centers and partner organizations receive ongoing training (at least annually) on the priority of service requirements to ensure consistent application across all programs.

### Systematic Intake and Assessment

- **Eligibility Screening:** Comprehensive intake processes include screening for priority categories to identify individuals who qualify for priority of service.
- **Case Manager Guidance:** Case managers are trained to assist priority clients in accessing training, education, and supportive services tailored to their needs.



## Service Delivery Strategies

- **Equitable Access:** The LWDB ensures that priority populations have timely and equitable access to employment and training opportunities, including individual career services and training programs.
- **Customized Support:** Tailored services, such as job readiness workshops, soft skills training, and referrals to supportive services, are designed to address the specific challenges faced by priority groups.

## Partnerships and Outreach

- **Community Engagement:** Collaboration with community organizations, public assistance programs, and other agencies increases outreach to priority populations and enhances referrals.
- **Targeted Marketing:** Outreach campaigns focus on raising awareness of available services among public assistance recipients, low-income individuals, and those with limited skills.

## Monitoring and Accountability

- **Performance Metrics:** Regular reviews of program data track the enrollment, participation, and outcomes of individuals in the priority categories.
- **Audits and Compliance Checks:** Internal audits and compliance reviews are conducted to ensure adherence to WIOA requirements.
- **Corrective Action Plans:** If discrepancies are identified, immediate corrective actions are implemented to address gaps in service delivery.

## Continuous Improvement

- **Stakeholder Feedback:** Feedback from clients and partners helps refine services and improve the overall experience for priority populations.
- **Staff Development:** Ongoing professional development ensures that staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of priority populations effectively.

By incorporating these measures, the LWDB guarantees compliance with WIOA Title I's adult priority of service requirements, ensuring that services are directed to those who need them most and aligning with the overarching goal of fostering economic self-sufficiency for all individuals in the workforce.

### **10. A description of how the LWDB is serving priority populations, including those with barriers to employment, as required by WIOA.**

The Catawba Local Area utilizes a multi-faceted approach to connect with and serve individuals from special populations, leveraging partnerships, targeted outreach, and innovative strategies.

### Partnerships in SC Works Centers

Several key partners, including SC Vocational Rehabilitation, the Department of Social Services (DSS), Alston Wilkes, Job Corps, Welvista, and others, collaborate with SC Works Centers on a part-time basis. These partnerships enable WIOA programs to connect with individuals from special populations and offer them tailored services.

### Outreach and Engagement Strategy

The Catawba Local Area One-Stop Operator has developed a comprehensive outreach plan to reach underserved job seekers who may not traditionally engage with SC Works services.

- **Community Connections:** Engaging with community partners, faith-based organizations, and participation in local events helps extend the reach of workforce services.
- **On-Site Workshops:** Offering workshops and informational sessions in community locations ensures accessibility for underserved individuals.
- **Expanded Media Presence:** Outreach efforts have grown significantly through increased use of social media platforms and local radio stations for promoting hiring events and job fairs.

### Youth Program Outreach

WIOA Title I Youth Programs prioritize outreach to special populations through direct engagement with community resources:

- **Adult Education Centers:** Youth staff dedicate time weekly to building relationships with area Adult Education Centers.
- **Agency Collaborations:** Strong connections with local staff at agencies such as DJJ, DSS, and SCVRD ensure alignment and support for youth in need.
- **Social Media Engagement:** Platforms such as Facebook and Instagram have proven effective in reaching and engaging youth.

### Priority Populations Committee Initiatives

The Catawba Workforce Development Board's Priority Populations Committee has actively developed resources and events to support special populations:

- **Informational Materials:** Partner staff benefit from disability education materials, improving their ability to serve clients with varying needs.

- **Employer Education:** Events focus on raising awareness among employers about the benefits of hiring individuals with disabilities.

### Ongoing Efforts and Future Plans

Building on these successes, the Catawba Local Area will continue:

- Collaborating with partners like SC Vocational Rehabilitation and the South Carolina Commission for the Blind.
- Expanding outreach to other underserved special populations.
- Utilizing innovative resources and communication tools to bridge gaps and create equitable opportunities.

This comprehensive approach ensures that individuals from special populations have access to meaningful services and pathways to employment.

## 11. A description of the LWDA's fiscal, programmatic, and equal opportunity/nondiscrimination monitoring process.

### Local Workforce Development Area Monitoring Process

The Catawba Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) has established a comprehensive monitoring process to ensure fiscal, programmatic, and equal opportunity (EO) compliance across all programs and activities funded under WIOA. This systematic approach ensures adherence to federal, state, and local regulations while promoting accountability, transparency, and continuous improvement.

#### Fiscal Monitoring

- **Regular Audits:** The LWDA conducts regular financial audits to ensure accurate tracking and reporting of funds. This includes reviewing expenditures, invoices, and supporting documentation to verify compliance with WIOA guidelines and state policies.
- **Budget Oversight:** The fiscal agent performs monthly reconciliations, ensuring alignment between the budget and actual spending, and promptly addresses any discrepancies.
- **Subrecipient Reviews:** Financial monitoring of subrecipients involves evaluating their compliance with contractual obligations, internal controls, and allowable cost requirements.

## Programmatic Monitoring

- **Quarterly Reviews:** The LWDA conducts quarterly programmatic reviews of service providers and partners to assess performance metrics, participant outcomes, and compliance with WIOA performance standards.
- **Case File Audits:** Participant files are reviewed for accuracy, completeness, and proper documentation of eligibility, services provided, and follow-up activities.
- **On-Site Visits:** LWDA staff conduct on-site visits to observe service delivery, evaluate program effectiveness, and ensure compliance with local, state, and federal guidelines.
- **Corrective Actions:** When deficiencies are identified, service providers are required to submit corrective action plans, which are closely monitored for timely implementation.

## Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Monitoring

- **EO Compliance Reviews:** Regular EO reviews are conducted to ensure compliance with nondiscrimination and accessibility requirements under WIOA, including Section 188 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- **Training and Technical Assistance:** Staff and partners receive ongoing training on EO policies, complaint resolution procedures, and best practices for serving diverse populations.
- **Accessibility Assessments:** Physical and programmatic accessibility of SC Works Centers is evaluated to ensure compliance with ADA standards and accessibility for all individuals, including those with disabilities.
- **Complaint Procedures:** A transparent and accessible complaint process is in place to address EO-related grievances. The LWDA investigates complaints thoroughly and takes appropriate corrective actions.

## Continuous Improvement

The LWDA uses the results of monitoring activities to identify trends, best practices, and areas for improvement. Insights gained are shared with partners and incorporated into training, policies, and program designs to enhance overall service delivery and ensure sustained compliance with WIOA requirements.

This robust monitoring framework ensures the LWDA upholds its commitment to fiscal responsibility, program effectiveness, and equitable access to services for all participants.

### 12. Copies of current LWDB policies and definitions, including the following:

- Supportive Services policy.
- OJT reimbursement policy.
- IWT policy, when using local funds.
- Youth incentives policy.

- Local training cap policy.
- Youth BSD policy (if applicable).
- Local definition for youth who “require additional assistance”.
- Adult and dislocated worker self-sufficiency definition(s) for training.

**13. Copies of current local workforce area documents, including the following:**

- Memorandum(a) of Understanding, including signature sheets.
- Resources Sharing Agreements, including signature sheets.
- All service provider grants, including statements of work and budgets.
- Statements of work for in-house operational staff (where applicable).
- Current or most recent Grant Application Request(s)/Request(s) for Proposals.
- LWDB By-Laws.
- LWDB and Committee meeting schedules.
- LWDB budgets.
- Local monitoring schedules.

**Local Plan Signatures**

**Local Workforce Development Board:**

Catawba Local Workforce  
Development Board

Mike Geddings	Catawba Regional Workforce Development Board Chair
_____ Name	_____ Title

_____ Signature	_____ Date
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**Local Grant Recipient Signatory Official:**

Catawba Local Workforce Development Area

Randy Imler	Catawba Regional COG Executive Director
_____ Name	_____ Title

_____ Signature	_____ Date
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