



LOCAL AREA PLAN 2023 to 2026

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

*Hunterdon and Somerset
Counties, New Jersey*

March 31, 2023
November 4, 2025 addendum

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Attachments and Links

1. Economy Overview – [2 New Jersey Counties](#) - Hunterdon and Somerset Counties; [July-September 2025](#)
2. Economy Overview for [Q4 2022 Hunterdon County](#) and [July-Sept 2025](#); & Economy Overview for [Q4 2022 Somerset County](#) and [July-September 2025](#); [go here for reports from 2019 to present](#)
3. [Local Market Information for 2024 and occupation projections through 2032](#)
4. [Greater Raritan WDB Labor Market Projections](#) – link, hard copy available
5. GRWDB PY 2017 to PY 2022 Participants & WIOA goals **AND PY23 and PY 2025 participants and goals**
6. State Negotiated WIOA Performance Measures for PY 2022 and PY2023 **AND PY 2024 and 2025**
7. Service levels GRWDB Partner-Service Matrix
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10. [Local Area Plan Presentation from Dec. 6, 2022](#) – link, hard copy available

i. Introduction: Summary of overarching goals, mission, vision and strategic themes

“Through policy, oversight and planning, the Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board (GRWDB) ensures that workforce training and education are responsive to and meet the needs of employers and job seekers in Hunterdon and Somerset Counties.”

This is the mission of the GRWDB, a public-private partnership responsible for oversight of the workforce development and delivery system in the two counties. The GRWDB envisions a flexible, seamless and robust workforce training and education system, reflected by:

- An environment of continuous improvement in efficiency and effectiveness of workforce investments based on the needs of job seekers and employers.
- High standards for all operating areas of the GRWDB, including the One-Stop Operator, career training services, youth services, employment services and other system partners and related agencies providing career-related programming.
- Robust policies which create a framework for program delivery while leaving room for partners to embrace flexibility and develop innovative strategies based on the changing needs of those being served.
- A spirit of collaboration in which all system partners – local, county, regional and state -- understand what each offer and look for opportunities to braid services and co-enroll customers in complementary programs.
- A culture where performance metrics and program outcomes are exceeded, and accomplishments are recognized.
- Increased engagement of employers and job seekers with a focus on taking what was learned during the pandemic to expand outreach and develop innovative methods to provide workforce services.
- Expanding opportunities for employers with a focus on providing new and innovative services to local businesses.
- Expanding opportunities and outcomes for job seekers, particularly youth and those with barriers, with a focus on sustainable wage career employment.
- Shared collaboration to achieve these goals across the northern LWDBA region.

The GRWDB understands that employers and job seekers discover available system services through many different avenues, for many different reasons. Some job seekers, for example, may only need access to job listings and resume assistance, while others require skill and aptitude evaluations, adult education, occupational skills training, apprenticeships, individual training account grants, or some type of supportive service to reach their goals. Some businesses may simply require assistance through an in-person or virtual job fair while others would benefit from a more intensive Incumbent Worker Training opportunity.

The GRWDB envisions a system in which partners and service providers can assist any customer in accessing services and information how, when and where needed, doing so guided by a spirit infused with motivation, innovation and collaboration.

ii. Regional and Local Workforce Strategies – Analysis of Labor Market Information

Draw on current data from NJDOL, as well as other Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) data. Please ensure alignment of regional data analysis included in your area's regional plan with local area data analysis included in your local plan. Please cite sources, timelines, and validity for any data used. Data should include an extensive analysis of local and regional economic conditions, including:

- Existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations*
- The employment and skill needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations*
- Alignment between key industry pipelines*
- Information on demographics and target populations*
- Current labor force employment (including underemployment and unemployment) data*
- Information on labor market trends and the education/skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment*
- Workforce development activities in the region, including an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services, the capacity to provide such services, and the connection of services to the One Stop system to address identified education and skill needs of the workforce and the employment needs of employers in the region*
- Impact of Covid on the labor market – economic, skills impacts, service and support impacts*

For the past four years, the GRWDB has worked with the New Jersey Department of Labor's Office of Information and Research to review and share timely labor market information for Hunterdon and Somerset Counties. This information, compiled by a Labor Market Information Specialist, is provided to the board in quarterly analytic reports that are then reviewed by stakeholders to understand real-time trends that support policy direction and development and new programmatic initiatives. All reports are also posted on the www.thegrwdb.org – they can be found on the [Resources – Labor Market Information & Analysis](#) page -- in an ongoing effort by the GRWDB to be transparent about its sources and resources and connect community members to information that will enrich their lives.

As part of this work, the GRWDB worked with two departments in Somerset County government to create the [Greater Raritan Unemployment Tracker](#), which provides aggregate information and metrics on unemployment filings in the two counties from March 2020 to the current month. The tracker presents information on unemployment filings in an easily understandable way that allows viewers to explore and identify trends that can help direct individual decision-making as well as more broad county policy.

The website's Labor Market Information page also links stakeholders and members of the public to a variety of data points aimed at helping people understand what is happening in the local area and inform a deliberative, meaningful decision process that supports smart, strategic career and business decisions.

The local labor market information trends

The pre-COVID, COVID and post-COVID data has been consistent over the past four years, in terms of jobs with the most openings, job locations and the top skills employers are looking for regardless of the role being performed. Regional, state and nationwide trends and reports on the changing nature of work and what job seekers are looking for their careers and personal satisfaction are also reflected in the business intelligence shared with GRWDB partners.

In looking at the data, the GRWDB has a top priority on those industry sectors which provide a career pathway and connecting job seekers to those opportunities. The data also shows that pharmaceutical manufacturing, software development and headquarter operations of all sorts (with a variety of roles) are economic drivers in the region.

Based on 2022 data, Healthcare and Social Assistance, Professional and Technical Services, Retail Trade, and Manufacturing are the top four industry sectors in Hunterdon and Somerset Counties, based on number of employees. Two of these sectors – Healthcare and Retail Trade – were among the top sectors in 2015, when the last Local Plan was done. It should be noted that these sectors were heavily impacted by COVID, with waves of unemployment, burnout and staffing shortages. With the aging populations in both counties, particularly in Hunterdon County, there is also an ongoing concern that the employee pipelines in both counties are constricted, making it difficult to find and keep employees in key industries, including manufacturing and healthcare. This trend is mirrored regionally, too.

Greater Raritan WDB		
NAICS + Industry Sector	Units	Average Annual Employment
62 Health care and social assistance	1,973	26,876
54 Professional and technical services	2,236	24,724
44 Retail trade	1,386	23,139
31 Manufacturing	474	18,599
56 Administrative and waste services	1,038	16,627
42 Wholesale trade	708	15,108
72 Accommodation and food services	1,041	12,768
55 Management of companies and enterprises	95	12,026
23 Construction	1,288	10,253
52 Finance and insurance	506	6,724
81 Other services, except public administration	1,283	6,604
48 Transportation and warehousing	268	6,164
61 Educational services	243	3,574
71 Arts, entertainment, and recreation	234	3,499
11 Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	113	723
22 Utilities	13	327
53 Real estate and rental and leasing	95	316
21 Mining	N/D	N/D
51 Information	N/D	N/D
99 Unclassified	414	483
Total Private Sector	14,118	203,207

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages
Prepared by: New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development, December, 2022

In 2021, the total number of jobs in the two counties was 242,041, a decline of 1.8 percent since 2016 and also reflective of the impact of COVID in the region. That number increased in 2022 and over the next five years jobs are projected to grow by 10,611.

As of 2021, the population in Somerset and Hunterdon Counties was 475,571, an increase of 4.5 percent since 2016. The population is expected to decrease by 0.6 percent between 2021 and 2026, driven by a decrease in more rural and smaller Hunterdon County, about one-third the size of Somerset County, which has a more robust population growth propelled by diversity. In the 2020 Census, 20.1 percent of the population in Somerset County was Asian, double the national number. The Census showed that the “white alone” population in Somerset County was 66.4 percent, below the national average of 75.8 percent and which is expected to drop below 50 percent in the 2030 Census. In Hunterdon County, the “white alone” population was 89.9 percent in 2020.

Both counties have a highly educated workforce, with 55 percent of the population in the two counties having a bachelor’s degree or higher, according to U.S. Census data. This educated, technically sound population aligns with the leading industries and occupations in the area. This is significantly above the state average (41.5 percent) and the national average (33.7 percent). This highly educated workforce translates to a median household income of \$122,534, nearly 40 percent above the national number, and an average earning per job of \$107,800, which is \$31,100 above the national average earnings of \$77,800.

Of course, this also means it is expensive to live in Somerset and Hunterdon Counties, with a cost-of-living 30 percent above the national average. Those on the other end of the economic spectrum also face a tougher climb to a level of economic stability. Connecting this population segment to the career-pathway jobs in the two counties is more important than ever. It also is imperative to reach out to younger community members – including high school- and middle school-age students and their caregivers – to educate them on the available opportunities.

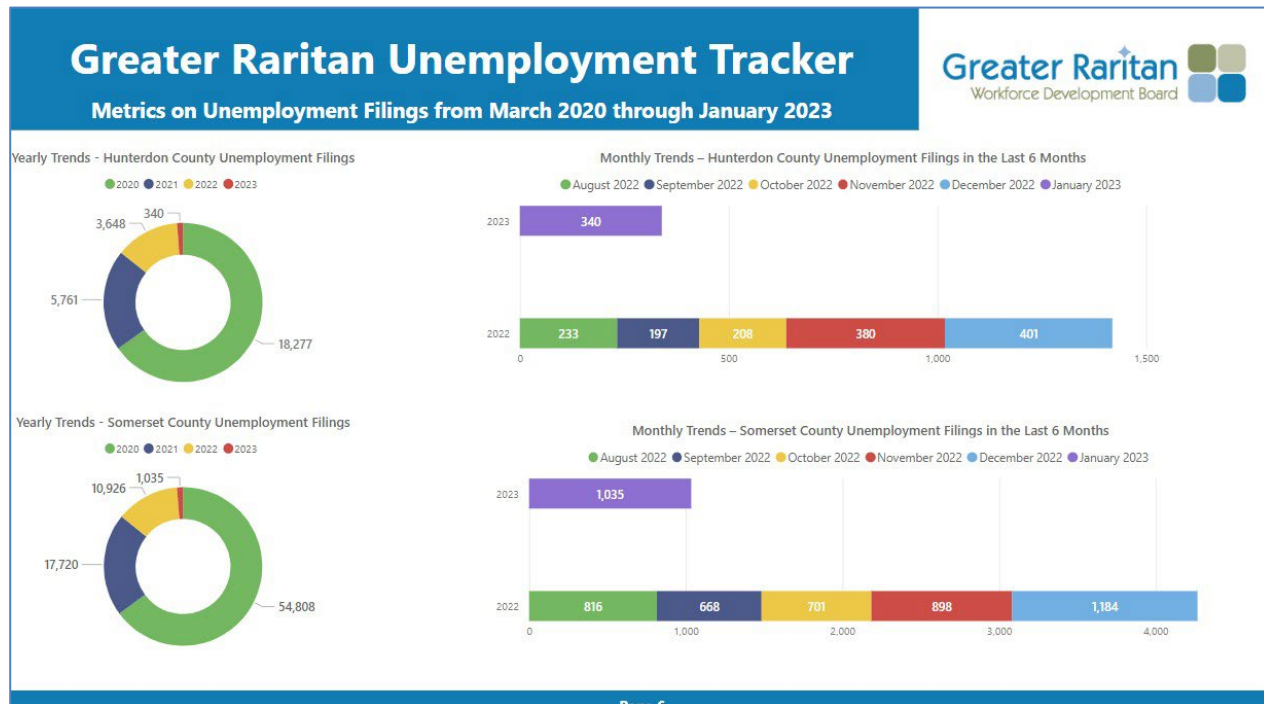
Challenges to overcome

Several crosscurrents push against employers and job seekers, starting with a mismatch between the skills desired by employers and the types of job seekers believe they will find fulfilling. Employers, locally and regionally, also say new workers still have significant soft skill / employability skill issues they need to develop or sharpen. Other issues:

- Some of the older members of the workforce impacted by COVID don’t understand how to navigate the swiftly changing landscape of how to find work.
- Younger segments of the population don’t feel connected to career pathway opportunities, in traditional sectors as well as emerging opportunities.
- Job seekers of all ages and backgrounds don’t understand how their skills can be applicable – or transferred -- to new occupations.
- Employers don’t understand how to market themselves in a competitive market.
- The workforce system can be siloed and be difficult to navigate, for employers and job seekers. In some instances, the local workforce system partners have made dramatic shifts in service-delivery formats to meet the changing needs of its customers, but the system is still struggling with how to market its services and expand its reach.

The unemployment picture

The Local Area has a lower unemployment rate than the rest of the state, with current the current average of 2.3 percent for the two counties. The chart, taken from the Greater Raritan Unemployment Tracker on the Data Labor Market Information page of www.thegrwdb.org, shows the unemployment trends in the Local Area since the start of the Covid pandemic. The area continues to track below state averages, though as noted previously, the area's high cost of living means that the underemployment rate is high, as is the need for residents to have multiple jobs. These are the residents system partners can reach out to in the coming months and years, to help educate them on the careers and skills they can target.



Based on unemployment filings and the 2020 Census, here are the municipalities with the largest percentage of its population filing for unemployment:

In Somerset County: South Bound Brook, 38 percent; North Plainfield and Manville, 36 percent; Bound Brook, 35 percent; and Franklin Township, 31 percent. In raw numbers, Franklin Township has had the most unemployment filings, at 20,283, followed by Bridgewater at 9,952, Hillsborough at 9,887, and North Plainfield at 7,790.

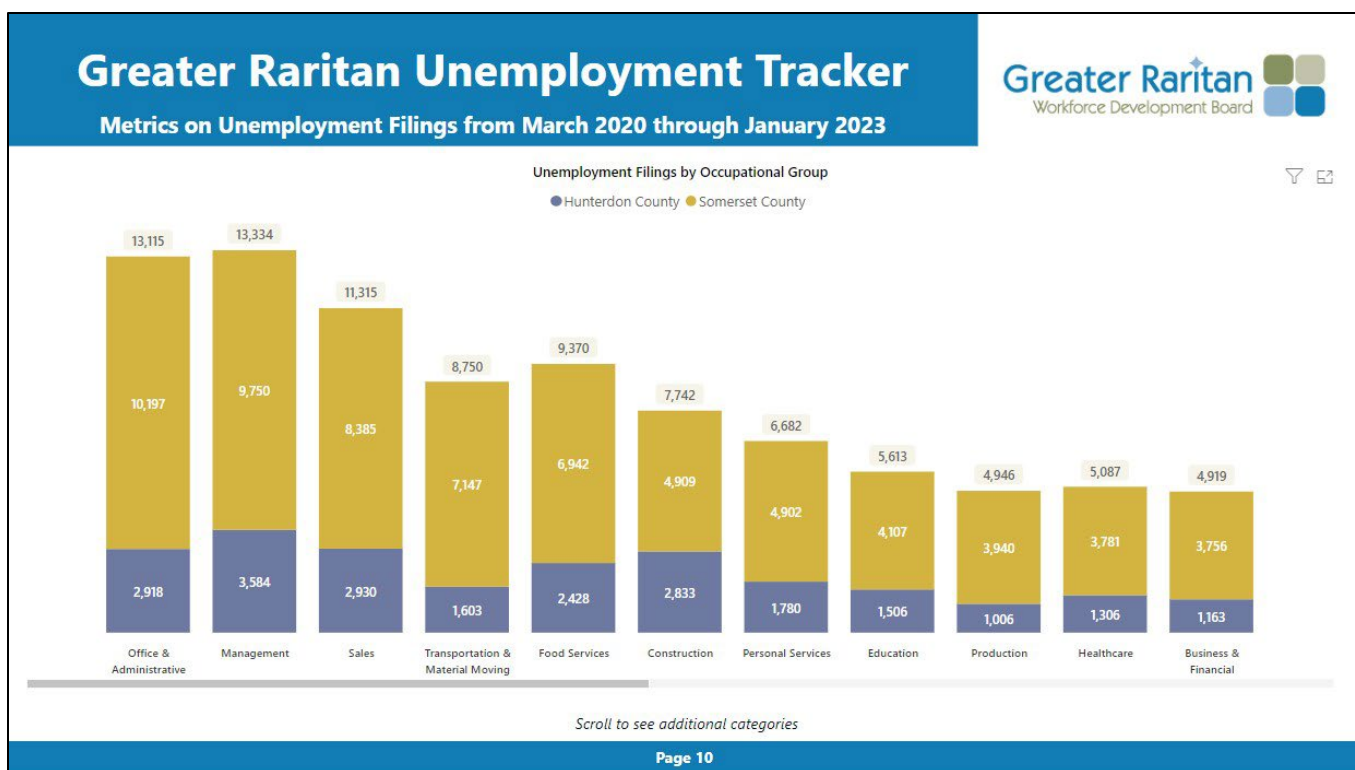
In Hunterdon County, Hampton, 64 percent; Stockton and Flemington, 56 percent; Glen Gardner, 51 percent; and Bloomsbury, 45 percent. In raw numbers, Raritan Township has had the most unemployment filings, at 3,958, followed by Readington at 3,370, Clinton Town/Township at 3,193 and Flemington at 2,561.

With these numbers front of mind, Local Area partners will work to ensure that services are targeted appropriately based upon the areas with the greatest unemployment impact.

Partners also can use the data accessible through the state Futureworks site to understand current customer flow, helping to create a clear picture of what municipalities and populations are currently being served and which may be underserved. For example, North Plainfield in Somerset County had a high number of unemployed; looking at current service levels for training grants and general career services, North Plainfield has low service levels. Census tract information also shows that the municipality has a very high number of Spanish-speaking households and a lower income. Putting this together shows that system partners have an opportunity to outreach to service providers in the municipality and connect people to services.

The information from the Greater Raritan Unemployment Trackers provides insight into the characteristics of the unemployed, including level of education. For example, 38 percent of the 120,526 people who filed for unemployment in the last three years in Hunterdon and Somerset counties had a bachelor's degree or higher, while 27 percent had a high school or equivalent degree; 11 percent had less than a high school education (divergent from state trends).

As shown below, the Tracker also shows the occupations those individuals were in when they filed for unemployment.

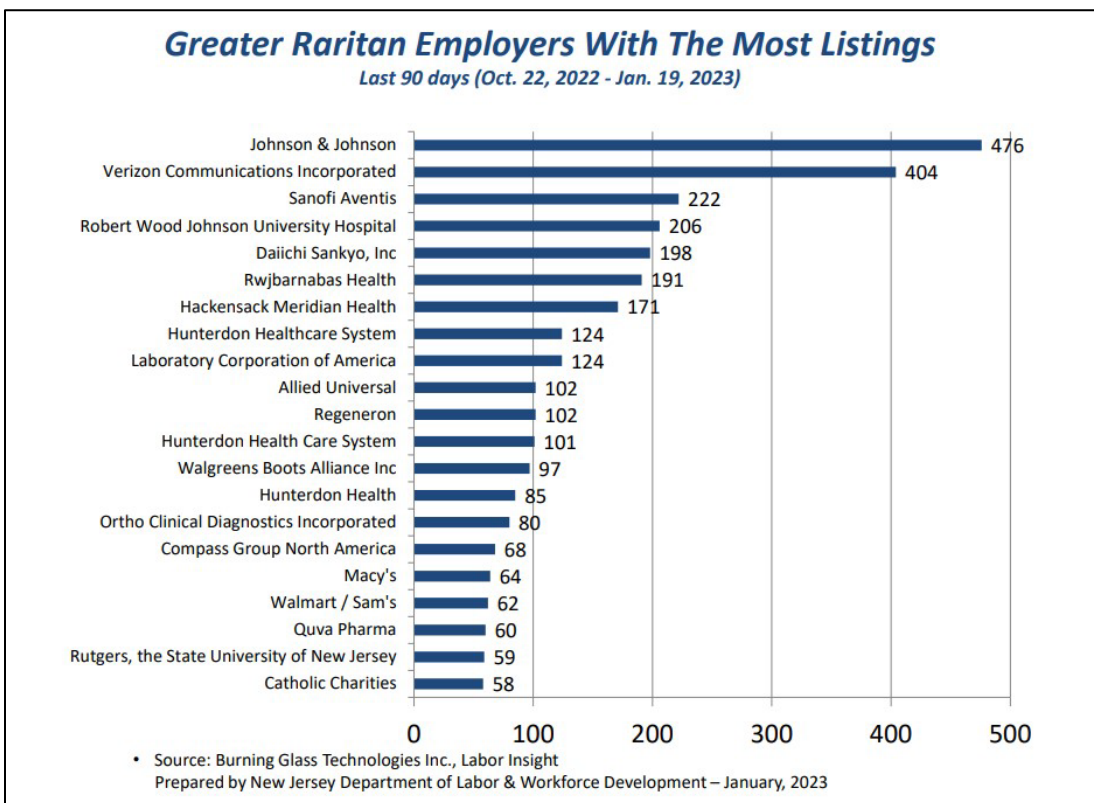


These data points can be placed against the rich data sets provided by the NJDOL to help create a roadmap to understand which industries and occupations job seekers can be directed to based on their skills, some of which will be transferrable to a new industry. This information also is of use to education/CTE partners so they can help craft programs that can be of use to local employers now and in the future, to ensure that the pipeline of potential employees is kept flowing. Occupational supply and demand in the region support the necessity of skilled, educated, tech-savvy and scientifically capable workers. Since projections in these industries and occupations are strong, we need to communicate this to our partners.

Communicating what is known

Greater Raritan staff communicate regularly with state LMI partners. In the past several years, this has included:

- Producing specialized reports for CTE partners who need to understand whether their plans match current and anticipated labor trends.
- Connecting businesses to the LMI team to help those businesses understand whether their employment plans match payment trends.
- Working with the LMI team to gather feedback on localized products on the Data page of the GRWDB website; this includes the Greater Raritan Unemployment Tracker and the dashboard plotting businesses with the most jobs on a transportation map.
- Sharing quarterly analysis of job postings at board meetings and posting it on the Data page so community members and stakeholders have access to it. Here is a [link to the report produced for the Jan. 26, 2023, board meeting](#), and this is a page from the report.



The LMI specialist reviews the reports at all board meetings, to ensure board members understand the directional data and any of their questions can be answered. At these meetings, the specialist also has emphasized the consistency of the data over the past four years, even during Covid; these interactions have helped staff, board and committee members better understand the data and provide feedback to the state. The LMI specialist also has provided input on other data points and links added to the data page over the past three years, including ACS data, links to the New Jersey Department of Labor website and numerous other resources that can be used by staff, board members and volunteers to gather career-related information, understand direction and build sound policy and programs.

Staff and the One-Stop Operator also have worked to utilize the many features in the Futureworks Dashboard, to understand customer flow and share that with board members. Following is an example of one of the reports produced for the December 6, 2022, planning Local Area Plan retreat for board, committee, and community members.

Combined Greater Raritan Performance from Program Year 2021 to Program Year 2022

This data represents the percent of the state goals that has met during the period between July 1, 2019, and June 30, 2022.

	Employment Q2 Adult	Employment Q2 DW	Employment Q2 Youth	Employment Q4 Adult	Employment Q4 DW
Cumberland/Salem/Cape May	104.5 %	101.3 %	107.3 %	106.1 %	101.3 %
Ocean County	96.7 %	99.7 %	99.4 %	91.7 %	106.3 %
Morris-Sussex-Warren	100.5 %	99.3 %	101.0 %	95.2 %	101.9 %
Atlantic County	102.2 %	97.6 %	120.0 %	97.4 %	105.2 %
Camden County	103.0 %	96.8 %	116.6 %	96.5 %	101.5 %
Essex County	86.8 %	94.4 %	109.1 %	83.2 %	93.2 %
Greater Raritan	77.6 %	93.2 %	132.4 %	79.2 %	97.7 %
Hudson County	96.7 %	89.0 %	93.6 %	91.2 %	88.9 %
Gloucester County	107.3 %	86.9 %	102.8 %	101.0 %	96.2 %
Bergen County	80.4 %	86.1 %	77.9 %	76.3 %	92.2 %
Passaic County	99.3 %	85.9 %	80.8 %	89.5 %	86.9 %
Mercer County	89.1 %	85.6 %	93.7 %	82.6 %	85.2 %
Burlington County	109.6 %	85.5 %	93.4 %	101.2 %	95.0 %
Jersey City	94.2 %	85.3 %	96.1 %	82.3 %	81.8 %
Morrmouth County	97.5 %	80.0 %	106.2 %	105.6 %	81.5 %
Newark	103.9 %	79.5 %	122.5 %	89.8 %	91.2 %
Union County	106.5 %	78.3 %	116.8 %	94.2 %	81.0 %
Middlesex County	96.8 %	77.2 %	103.3 %	94.1 %	86.7 %

LEGEND	
Red	Less than 90% Achieved
Yellow	90 to 100% Achieved
Green	Greater than 100% Achieved

The Futureworks data is shared and reviewed at each quarterly board meeting, so that board members understand how the local performance is tracking toward the negotiated state targets and as compared to the other Local Areas in the state. As part of this transparency effort, the area's One-Stop Operator, in monthly reports, has highlighted different Futureworks data, such as where Career Center clients live. The Operator and GRWDB Director also have asked board members for feedback, to get additional ideas for data sets board and committee members might use in their decision-making process. In addition, the GRWDB's Operations Committee made understanding the data and metrics around data to be one of the four key deliverables the committee will focus on as part of its mission and vision.

Local dashboards, local trends

In 2015, the board of the GRWDB asked staff and partners to start a performance metrics dashboard to capture the results of different programmatic work done for clients. Initially, this focused on the One-Stop Career Training Center and its related adult, dislocated and youth programmatic client numbers. The goal was to capture the impact being made beyond the number of Individual Training Account (ITA) grants, and to track this against other local data points found in Census data as well as through information sharing by service providers.

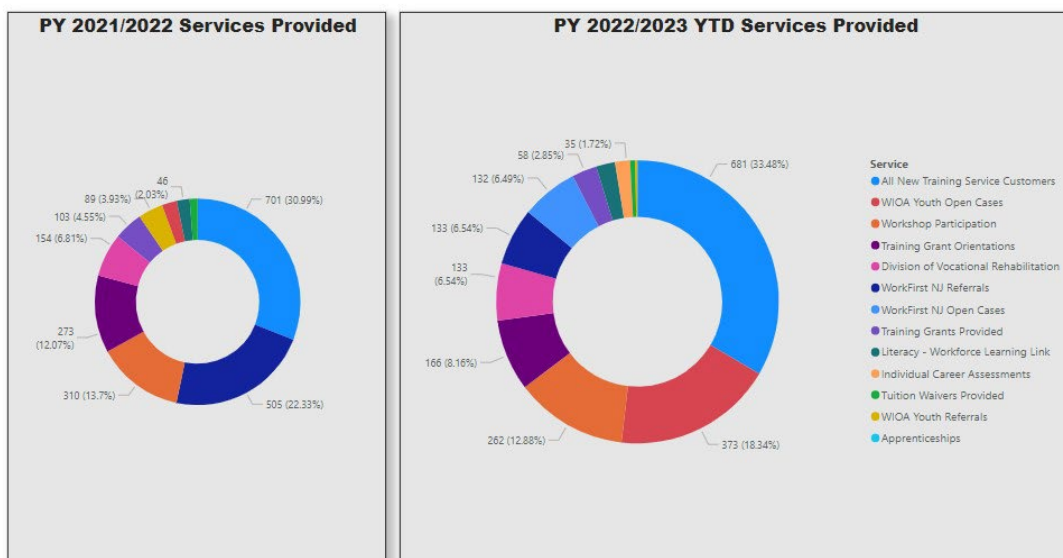
Over the past several years, the different types of data sets have grown – in a few instances,

data stopped being captured because a program ended. Additional data now reflected in the GRWDB Dashboard has grown to include:

- Walk-in clients served by the Training Center team, beyond those who go through the ITA process.
- Workshops presented by the Training Center career coach, either in person or virtually, with library and other public partners.
- Virtual, hybrid and in-person recruitments conducted by the state Business Services team.
- New programs added by the GRWDB, including the SkillUp Greater Raritan platform launched in 2020 and different outreach efforts/webinars conducted by board staff, sometimes with new partners or subject-matter experts.
- The number of subscribers to the text alert service maintained by the Training Center team. (As part of this, new promotional material was created to promote sign-ups to the service.)
- Workfirst NJ open cases.
- Apprenticeship and work-based learning programs offered by partners.

The dashboard became particularly important during Covid, as it allowed the GRWDB to reflect the varied work being done by all partners adapting to new ways of providing services.

For the past eight years, this data was collected in an ever-expanding Excel document and shared with board and committee members during meetings. But with new technological capabilities coming on line – and with the success of the Unemployment Tracker in mind -- GRWDB staff reached out to Somerset County GIS team members to see if the PowerBi platform could be used to move the dashboard to a new presentation. Following several months of experimentation, the team developed a virtual dashboard now found on the [About – Performance Metrics tab](#) of the www.thegrwdb.org. Data is presented in three-year groupings built around the service categories that are still captured and maintained in the Excel document. Below is the page showing different services categories for Program Year 2021 and through January 2023 of Program Year 2022.



The goal of the various data sets is to allow stakeholders to have a real-time understanding of how services are being provided and who they are being provided to as partners work to assist employers and job seekers in the two counties. It also has allowed board members, staff and partners to have a clearer understanding of what is working and where gaps may exist, and thereby develop policy, procedures and programming to further refine what is being offered.

Several team members have taken part in training to better understand how the platforms can be used, to harness the power of the data and share it with the different service partners. As part of the Program Year 2023 staffing plans, the board aims to add a staff position that will focus on all data systems and social media, tying together their capabilities and reporting out trends and ideas to other staff, board and committee members and system partners.

Over the past four years, GRWDB staff have worked to understand the different parts of a sometimes-disparate system and promote collaboration. For example, the local community college has an increasing number of opportunities around apprenticeships and select boot camps that correspond to local occupational priorities. After learning about an upcoming bootcamp this spring, GRWDB staff requested that a meeting of stakeholders be convened, with a focus on agencies working in communities with a high population of minorities directly impacted by COVID and that have faced more barriers to career success because of a variety of socio-economic factors. The goal was to increase awareness of the upcoming opportunity. Previously, initiatives like this were siloed and shared too late for assistance.

While communication has improved, a key challenge of the workforce system, locally and regionally, revolves around effectiveness – helping job seekers and employers understand what services are available to them while also helping the many different agencies delivering those services do so in ways that are collaborative, clear and manageable. Over the past few years, different partners have found new ways to offer services that go beyond paper and brick and mortar. As is so often said, the local system changes implemented since COVID reflect an acceleration of trends that many thought would happen in five to 10 years. These changes are here to stay, and the local system continues to show flexibility and openness to do work in new and innovative ways.

But looking to the next four years, the local system has to continue to grapple with relevance:

- How does it show the benefits of participating in a system in a time when unemployment is at a record low.
- How does it implement programs that are easy to use and meaningful to job seekers and to those looking for better careers.
- How does it help employers trying to grow understand how the nature of work has changed, thereby transforming how businesses must market themselves.
- How does it communicate its data to local educators and stakeholders so that different work-based learning opportunities are enhanced and/or introduced, and that vocational trades are valued as a career pathway.
- How does it help local system partners, including state Employment Services, state Business Services, state DVR team members, contracted career training and youth service providers and GRWDB staff continue to build on its successes and ensure the system becomes more collaborative, efficient and effective.

iii. **Regional & Local Workforce Strategies -- Strategic Priorities**

Describe the strategic vision, goals, and priorities for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment) at the regional and local level. The LWDA's strategy should include specific expectations related to:

- Expanding access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment.*
- Expanding and ensuring access to workforce development services that serve to bring diversity, equity and inclusion to the workforce.*
- Facilitating the development of career pathways and co-enrollment across WIOA and partner programs.*
- Increasing access through partners and programs to a variety of individualized career and training services, including career coaching, work readiness activities, as well as training programs that result in industry-valued credentials.*
- Increasing work-based learning opportunities in partnership with postsecondary, employer, and workforce partners, including through On-the-Job Training, Transitional Jobs, and Apprenticeship, as well as for youth through Youth Work Experiences.*
- Supporting multiple pathways for young people aged 16-24 through One-Stop Career Center services, and additional youth program models.*
- For LWDA's with significant Migrant Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) programs: conducting vigorous outreach to communicate a full range of services to a population that may be unable to be reached with normal intake activities.*

With the onset of Covid, the Career Training Center and the GRWDB converted to virtual service offerings throughout the spring and summer of 2020; this included career workshops, special programs with subject matter experts, informational programs on new local services, converting paper documents to web-based, fillable documents and offering all career and counseling services by phone, computer and, when possible, in person. The area's Business Services Representatives (BSR) focused on developing a Job Match program that GRWDB staff and then Training Center staff assisted with; in addition, the BSRs began offering Virtual Recruitments in place of the in-person events that had been a mainstay of their work.

Interestingly, all of the platform changes implemented at the start of Covid continue and are simply the way business is done in the Local Area – meeting people when and where they need service. It should also be noted that many customers – job seekers and employers -- prefer these delivery methods. They don't have to worry about transportation or finding assistance with childcare or eldercare or wonder how they will get their work done because they are traveling to and from an event.

In our on-demand world, job seekers can access SkillUp/Metrix training when and where they want it. They can set up appointments for their convenience, and with the Greater Raritan Training Center, even access counselors on a Monday evening, with one-day-a-week evening hours added in the fall of 2022. Employers can post their job openings in NLx and then have a local professional do a Job Match using individuals in AOSOS. Then they can work with a

BSR to set up a Virtual or in-person recruitment and get a list of all registrants that they can use to expand their job-seeker base.

Starting with sound policy

A key role of the Local Workforce Development Board is to ensure that policies are in place that ensure equitable access to services and effectiveness. In recent years, the GRWDB board has approved new policies designed to do just that. These include (but are not limited to):

- In 2020, a supportive services policy which has allowed individuals access to different benefits that have improved their chances for success.
- In 2020 and 2022, On-the-Job Training and Incumbent Worker Training policies designed to help businesses better prepare new and existing employees for career-pathway roles.
- In 2022, several foundational policies that help guide all partners to better outcomes; these include an emphasis on co-enrollment and broadening access to programs, especially in a region with a high cost of living.

All policies can be found on the [About – Mission, Policies and Strategic Priorities](http://www.thegrwdb.org) page of www.thegrwdb.org.

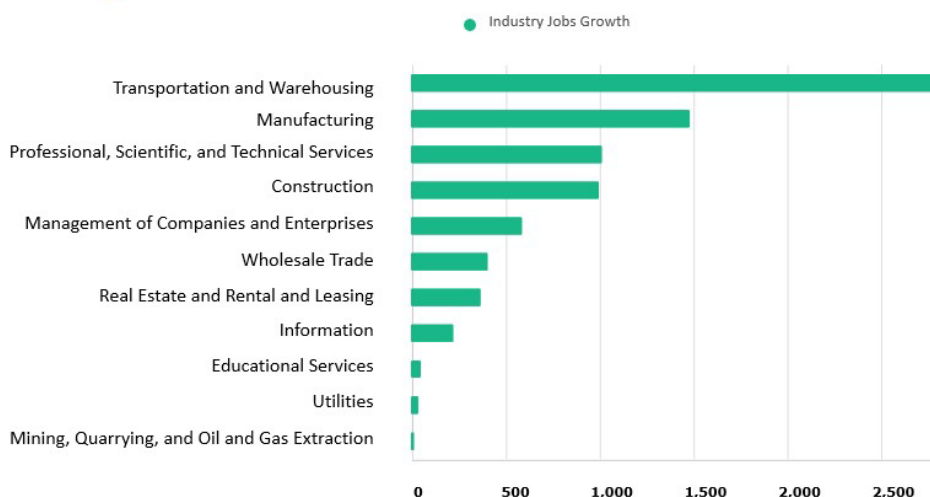
This page also delineates the strategic priorities which have guided the work of the board, its committees, its staff members, and its system partners:

- Focus on sector strategies consistent with the New Jersey State (Economic Development) Plan and the New Jersey Combined (workforce development) Plan.
- Build strategic alliances with partners, including those in economic development.
- Coordinate outreach to the business community among the various entities currently engaged in contacting businesses.
- Focus strategies on career paths versus simply employment.
- Recognize the role that transportation plays in employment.
- Develop additional revenue streams and be innovative about finances.
- Develop, host and promote career-related programming and resources as appropriate for job seekers and businesses.

The GRWDB aims to use its detailed policies to support and build out these strategic priorities, basing decisions on data-rich analysis that also folds in the experiences of the customers being assisted and the input of staff doing the work.

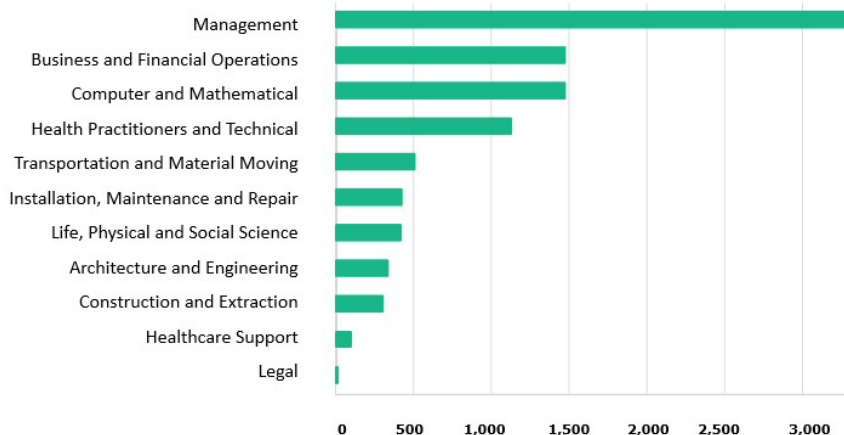
As stated previously, the need for labor, in the Local Area as well as the Northern Region, has been strong and is expected to continue, especially in the industries and occupations shown on the next page. Business growth coupled by the increasing pace of retirements and a constricted pipeline complicate this trend. Taking into consideration the current and projected labor needs, declining workforce participation, and employers' inability to fill openings, a priority at the regional level and local levels will be to focus on expanding the labor supply by tapping on populations with barriers. While the region has a high level of educated residents, many occupations do not require a college degree and individuals with "barriers to employment" may become "job-ready" to fill many of these positions and start on a career pathway. This can assist eligible individuals with barriers to employment and businesses.

Top Growing Industries



Source: Lightcast Q4 2022 Data Set | www.economicmodeling.co Prepared by New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development, December 2022

Top Growing Occupations



Source: Lightcast Q4 2022 Data Set | www.economicmodeling.co Prepared by New Jersey Department of Labor & Workforce Development, December 2022

The GRWDB understands these growing industries and occupations share some common needs, focusing on foundational skills, digital literacy and a comfort with using and adapting to technology. This is why the SkillUp / Metrix Learning platform, introduced in Greater Raritan in February 2020, is important to all populations assisted by local system partners. Helping individuals master and benefit from the capabilities and features of this platform, which has been used by 3,400-plus individuals since its introduction, helps career seekers embrace and understand the changing of nature of work, locally and beyond.

Local Area partners also have emphasized the need to connect individuals to other supportive services they made need, with the understanding that helping people find stability in their lives will enhance the likelihood for career-related success. The Local Area added a supportive services line to its budget for Program Year 2021 and continues to expand available dollars.

Connecting and collaborating

While ensuring that job seekers are aware of current business needs and are connected to the system services aimed to helping them capitalize on opportunities, GRWDB and its partners are working to understand the many in-demand and emerging “technical” opportunities that do not require a college degree. For example, the GRWDB and Raritan Valley Community College are working together to promote several green energy boot camps planned at the college throughout 2023. These programs do not require a college degree and include foundational training, like OSHA 10, that can be used in other occupations. System partners are being made aware of these opportunities so they can share them with clients.

Information sharing like this is critical, whether it is for job seekers or employers.

The Program Year 2022 budget carved out dollars for work-based learning programs, including On-The-Job Training and Incumbent Worker Training. The state also offers On-the-Job Training opportunities, and the SkillUp / Metrix Learning can be used for Incumbent Worker Training. To make it easier for employers to understand their options, the GRWDB created a one-sheet, [We Mean Business](#), in consultation with state partners. GRWDB staff participate in monthly learning opportunities led by the BSRs, and also have spoken at events presented by the Somerset County Business Partnership and the Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce. The latter also is hosting Hunterdon County-based multi-employer Job Fairs.

GRWDB staff also have worked to enhance connections with the economic development divisions in each county government, which has led to information sharing and opportunities for collaboration. One example is a New Jersey Business Action Center event for businesses conducted on March 8, 2023, at Raritan Valley Community College. The GRWDB was invited to this event by Somerset County economic development staff, who also asked the GRWDB to invite state BSRs. Connections like these take nurturing and mutual respect but partners understand that working together to make a complex system accessible is a top priority.

Collaboration among partners can take many forms. In 2022 and the beginning of 2023, the GRWDB worked with Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset and Middle Earth, a youth agency which is also one of the vendor partners providing youth work experience services in the Local Area, on a small workforce grant funded by Sanofi. This grant allowed the GRWDB to get into several high schools in the Somerset County with high minority populations and introduce these populations to a variety of services, including SkillUp, cohort training and the GRWDB’s youth programs for out-of-school youth. This effort got the GRWDB in front of hundreds of youth while also strengthening the bonds between partners.

In 2020, the GRWDB successfully applied for the competitive Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) competitive grant opportunity funded by the NJDOL. The first year was a struggle because it was launched at the start of the Covid pandemic. By 2022, the program grew to 56 participants, including 20 positions supported by American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding supplied by the Somerset County Board of County Commissioners. This program has allowed the GRWDB to serve new young individuals (several were employed by the businesses), while introducing local businesses to workforce system services. The 2023 program continues the upward trend with funding for 80 positions -- 60 through state funding, and another 20 funded through Somerset County ARP allocations.

This program has grown because of effective, targeted, and, sometimes relentless, outreach by a GRWDB staff member who has used every opportunity to talk about the program. Planning for the next year begins right after the program year ends, and outreach begins in earnest in January, even before the amount of funding is known.

Outreach and more outreach

Planned, purposeful local outreach is a hallmark of the GRWDB staff and its partners. In January 2022, the GRWDB competed for a Pathways to Recovery grant for Somerset and Hunterdon Counties. This grant provides career-related training, coaching and supportive services to individuals in the two counties impacted directly or indirectly by the opioid / drug epidemic. A program navigator was brought on to lead the effort, in concert with a vendor. Launching the program from scratch was challenging, and included understanding the other private and public substance-abuse programs in the two counties and how all these programs could connect. Staff also had to understand how the stigma around the topic can impact the population the program is directed to help as well as the real barriers the population faces. So, the program navigator and other GRWDB staff have joined different group meetings in both counties, to continue to share information on an ongoing basis and keep the Pathways program top of mind. The navigator also reached out to libraries in some of the communities most heavily impacted by the opioid epidemic to set a weekly schedule of outreach events, so that community members can be introduced to the services in a non-threatening way.

This is hard, slow work but in the winter of 2023, the navigator started to see a steady increase in program numbers. This is another example of how nurtured connections can breed positive results.

One area the GRWDB and its partners need to put renewed connective focus on in the coming months and years is the Migrant Seasonal Farmworker (MSFW) program. Greater Raritan is fortunate to have an MSFW, Spanish-speaking representative who covers the Local Area as well as Morris County. This team member began working in the One-Stop Career Center's Employment Services area in 2020, and just as the team member was getting to know the area, the Covid pandemic shut everything down, complicating outreach efforts. In 2022, the team member was able to start getting back to in-person visits in the area, and GRWDB participated in program monitoring, to understand challenges facing program implementation. As a result of this monitoring, the GRWDB has committed to adding a Spanish language page on related services to www.thegrwdb.org; this will be done in 2023.

This team member sits on the GRWDB's Literacy Committee, which knits together Title II literacy provider efforts with the literacy services offered by several nonprofit agencies. This allows committee members to hear about some of the needs of the MSFW population and for the MSFW team member to understand how the population may use the area's services. The GRWDB director also sits on state meetings focused on this population, to deepen connections and learn about best practices from other areas that may assist in the development of effective services locally.

All these connective strategies are designed to support the success of the area's priorities and lead to a local system that is robust, flexible and collaborative.

iv. **One-Stop Career Center Operations -- One-Stop Service Delivery and Flow**

Provide an overview of the role that partners, programs, and services required by WIOA play in your One-Stop Career Center system regionally and locally, as well as specific details regarding the cultivation and maintenance of these partnerships and the integration of supports into service delivery flow. These include:

- *Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth*
- *Title II Adult Education/Literacy*
- *Title III Wagner-Peyser*
- *Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation*
- *Title III Unemployment Compensation*
- *WorkFirst New Jersey*
- *Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Program*
- *Trade Adjustment Assistance Program*
- *Senior Community Service Employment Program*
- *Jobs for Veterans State Grant*
- *Reentry Employment Opportunities*
- *Title I Job Corps*
- *Title I YouthBuild*
- *Career and Technical Education programs*
- *HUD Employment and Training*
- *HHS Employment and Training*

In today's interconnected world, a customer may enter the local or state workforce system in many ways: by stumbling upon a resource in a Google search; by catching a post about a program on Facebook or LinkedIn; by attending a meeting of a local agency or a governmental meeting; by word-of-mouth from a friend; by getting an outreach email from a GRWDB partner; by reading about it the newspaper; or by walking into a brick-and-mortar location.

In Hunterdon County, the small physical location of the Greater Raritan One-Stop Career Center (6 Gauntt Place, Flemington) houses representatives from Employment Services and Training Services, with occasional representation from DVRS.

In Somerset County, Employment Services (including the Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Program, Reentry Employment Opportunities and Pathstone / senior employment), Business Services and DVRS are in the Greater Raritan One-Stop Career Center building (75 Veterans Memorial Boulevard, Somerville) while Training Services is in another building (the Somerset County Human Services building at 27 Warren St., Somerville); the locations are separated by a parking lot and a parking deck and are only a short walk apart. (The GRWDB office is also located at 27 Warren St.) The Workforce Learning Link, operated by a vendor, is situated in two locations: in the Training Services suite in Somerville and in an office building on Bartles Corner Road in Flemington.

WorkFirst New Jersey career services for both counties are offered by a vendor located in the Somerset County Board of Social Services (CWA) building, which is a three- block walk (or about five to 10 minutes) from the Training Services and Employment Services locations.

Youth employment services are coordinated by two vendors: one provides outreach in Hunterdon County. The second vendor provides outreach in Somerset County and career programming, including work-based learning, for out-of-school youth in both counties.

The career navigators in the Training Center provide case management for WorkFirst New Jersey and local youth referrals, connecting customers to training and career service programs and/or referring individuals to needed social-services programming that can support the successful completion of personal goals. These navigators also assist job seekers interested in individual training opportunities as well as cohort-based and work-based opportunities, including apprenticeships, On-the-Job Training and Incumbent Worker Training and similar programs, which can be initiated by the GRWDB, state partners or other local partners.

As service rhythms continue to evolve, conversation among all parts of the system will be important to understand what is working and what needs to be tweaked, so that customers are directed effectively. As noted in the next section, this is happening now and will continue to occur in the coming months and years.

For Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, in the past several years, staff of the GRWDB have worked extensively with individual high schools and the community college, to provide labor market information and directional feedback on different programs and courses. The GRWDB also has involved state labor market information team members to develop reports on specific occupations being considered by the schools and community college.

Since COVID, unemployment insurance (UI) compensation representation has not been physically located in the Local Area. (Prior to COVID, the office was in the One-Stop Career Center in Somerville, next to ES and DVRS but had been steadily declining in numbers.) Throughout COVID, as unemployment claims were migrated to virtual platforms, the GRWDB worked with partners to communicate aggressively the process individuals had to use to file claims and get questions answered. That was a taxing process, particularly in 2020 and the first part of 2021. As the system settled down, GRWDB staff continued to provide direction, information and news releases, locally and regionally for the Garden State Employment and Training Association, to assist in the communication efforts. In 2022, when it was clear that UI was not returning to Somerville, signage was placed in several buildings directing people to the state website and call center, and directional material was shared with all partners as well as the security staff at the One-Stop Career Center in Somerville, since that staff serves as a first touch point for walk-ins. Individuals who need in-person assistance are directed to one of the 14 locations around the state and assisted with using the appointment system on the state website. Information is also highlighted on the home page of www.thegrwdb.org. This has become the new normal for the Local Area and is expected to continue for the foreseeable future.

It should be noted that the Local Area does not offer Title I Job Corps, Title I Youth Build or HUD or HHS employment and training programming.

Open lines of communication

With these complex (and sometime still-evolving) realities in mind, it is crucial to have ongoing, flexible and very open lines of communication between the partners who comprise the system. Each needs to understand one another's services and how warm referrals can be made quickly and cleanly to ensure a positive experience for those looking for assistance.

In the Local Area, that process was more in-person-based prior to Covid. As previously described in the Local Plan, partners had to adapt to the changing nature of how and when individuals want to access their services; this has required more flexibility and openness to sharing information and resources. This also means that conversation must occur regularly among partners, simply because situations can change. The conversations also regularly incorporate feedback provided by job seekers and employers who call or email, walk in the physical locations for services or interact with all partners during community outreach events.

These conversations occur in many ways:

- At the quarterly GRWDB board meetings
- At the quarterly meetings of the GRWDB's four committees
- At the quarterly One-Stop Partner meetings coordinated by the One-Stop Operator
- At Greater Raritan team staff meetings conducted three times annually
- At staff meetings conducted regularly by the individual partners
- In regular and informal conversations between partners, which can happen in person, by phone or virtually
- Through a weekly Resources email sent out by the GRWDB director to all board and committee members and local team staff members
- Through a biannual GRWDB newsletter as well as numerous news releases and social media posts on different platforms, including LinkedIn and Facebook
- Through aggressive and constant maintenance of the GRWDB website
- Through a weekly text alert service which highlights upcoming and ongoing program and services.

This feedback loop must be – and is – constant and supple, allowing partners to have dialog that shares successes and excavates challenges, with the end goal of supporting the ongoing development and integration of One-Stop partner, programs, and services at the local level. What can this look like in practice?

For the Program Year 2022, the GRWDB Board reissued its One-Stop Operator RFP and added a provision that the local Training Center include extended in-person service hours, with the hope that this would allow time-strapped individuals the opportunity to access services more conveniently. The Training Center was open 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday; in late September of 2022, the Center added to its Monday schedule, staying open until 7 p.m. This was cast as an experiment and adoption has been very low, despite promotion of the available extra time. Feedback from the service providers will help the board to decide whether additional hours will be part of new service contracts, but all parties agreed that continued experimentation like this is integral to the development of effective services in the Local Area.

The GRWDB director recently met with the state Business Services Representative and the On-the-Job Training (OJT) writer for the Local Area to review the flow for queries regarding OJT contracts by employers, since each partner offers options that are largely similar but do carry a few permutations. For the partners, this conversation was important to understand each program and to have a smooth process that will allow employers to benefit from the program and support employment opportunities. The open conversation proved helpful, and the parties came away with an agreement that while the process may change depending upon staffing future changes, the focus will remain on the employer customer, to ensure questions are answered and the service provided.

In another example, the area's One-Stop Operator (who also serves as the Direct Services Coordinator for the Training Center) was concerned during Covid about the drop-off in numbers for WorkFirst New Jersey clients: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); General Assistance (GA) or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). So the Operator and the Training Center Director worked with the program vendor to develop new, virtual ways to present career programming which allowed clients to access services when and where they wanted it, without being tethered to a physical location. This early adaption helped the program continue and develop in new and positive ways.

On a parallel track, GRWDB staff worked with the state to get approval to launch a Chromebook loaner program for WorkFirst New Jersey customers, which allows participants to access a variety of career resources in a remote group setting and as their time permits. Since it was launched, the Chromebook fleet has grown from 20 to 45, and of those, 13 are loaned out with the WiFi enabled. To build out this program, the GRWDB partnered with the Somerset County Library System, which coordinates the loaning out and return of the Chromebooks. The library system also loans out WiFi hot spots, which can be used by clients as needed, and this partnership has introduced many clients to local library services. As of March 1, 2023, the Chromebooks have been loaned out more than 140 times.

As Fran Leddy, the supervisor of Adult Programs and Services for the local WorkFirst vendor program, noted, “The program narrows the digital divide by offering all customers access to technology and the Internet. It provides individuals with the opportunity to participate in career-related workshops and job search activities when faced with the barriers of transportation and childcare. In addition, job seekers can work at their own pace at a time that is most convenient to develop the job search skills, soft skills and digital literacy skills which are necessary for successful employment in the current workforce.”



Innovation has been a hallmark with some regional partners, programs and services, too.

In 2020 and 2021, the GRWDB partnered with the Middlesex County Workforce Development Board for a Dislocated Worker program that provided in-demand training to 65 people in the three counties. Staffs collaborated on the grant writing and the GRWDB took the lead for fiscal and budget reporting. During this same period, the Local Area also supported another Dislocated Worker program run through North Jersey Partners – we connected eligible individuals to these services. This model continues to be the norm for the GRWDB.

For example, this program year, the GRWDB has worked with Middlesex County on an Incumbent Worker Training program at the Raritan Valley Community College, focusing on an employer whose footprint falls in Somerset and Middlesex Counties. The GRWDB will take the lead on this program and get reimbursed for any Middlesex County individuals trained as part of this opportunity.

It also is now standard for all program flyers and details being hosted in the three counties to be shared between team members responsible for posting on different platforms. Looking at the commuting patterns, people live and work between the counties and the goal has been to help promote initiatives that can assist job seekers and employers, regardless of where we live. On its calendar and in the text alert service, information and flyers on all types of career-related programs also are shared, whether they came from other LWDAs, from the state and even nationally, as appropriate.

Individual voices

In 2018, the Greater Raritan One-Stop Training Center introduced a customer service satisfaction tool which uses the Net Performance Score (NPS) to gather data and analyze customer satisfaction with their One-Stop experience. The survey helps understand where customers are coming from and which referral source got them to the Training Center; besides providing a satisfaction score, it also asks respondents to provide suggestions to increase the value of the services. Results are typically shared quarterly, though throughout COVID, there were longer time periods for the surveys. Based on global NPS standards, companies with a calculated score of zero are termed as good companies; those with a score of 50 are termed excellent and those with a score of 70 are termed as world class.

Scores for the Training Center have consistently been in the 80s; this also tracked with a separate survey done in 2021 of GRWDB-area services. Most of the respondents who provide comments use the space to express their thanks or single out an individual or individuals who provided exceptional service. Additional comments usually focus on the need to market available services more, or requests for additional services.

Interestingly, in the surveys completed between July 1, 2022, and December 13, 2022, the referral sources were as follows: 12 percent, Unemployment Process; 21 percent, Family/Friend; 15 percent, Employment Services; 10 percent, Referred by Training Provider; 9 percent, Text Notification; 6 percent, Website; 15 percent, Community Agency; and 12 percent, Job Seeker Workshop. These varied sources reflect the many ways individuals can hear about local services, as well as the very aggressive measures the GRWDB and its partners have taken and will continue to take to promote the area's services.

As part of the One-Stop Operator RFP, the GRWDB requested that the Operator document stories of how different individuals have been assisted by partners throughout the local system. A minimum of six stories are shared with the GRWDB during the program year, and these stories find their way to the One-Stop Operator Report on the [About – One Stop Partners](#) tab; in a slider presentation on the bottom of the [Resources – Job Seekers](#) tab of the website; and in the [GRWDB Annual Reports](#). These stories help board and committee members, and the community understand the impact of the work being done in the Local Area.

Information on all Board and Committee members are posted in two places on the GRWDB website, and detailed meeting minutes, found on the [Events – Meeting Packages](#) tab, enable the community to transparently see what is being done on the local level. Each board and committee agenda leads with the mission and vision statements crafted and annually updated by members. As part of this communication effort, the GRWDB also regularly asks for community input as well as the input of those people assisted and asks for new committee members are made through social media and traditional print outlets every six months.

In February 2020, just prior to the start of COVID, a GRWDB staff member along with two committee members led listening sessions with youth and WorkFirst consumers. In the second half of 2023, the GRWDB plans on redoing these efforts, as a way to incorporate client voices into the local planning efforts, and to get additional feedback on how services are perceived.

In addition, the GRWDB has asked service providers to ask their clients to participate in GRWDB committee meetings; this has met with very limited success, with an individual speaking once at the Disabilities Committee and a young person participating in several Youth Committee meetings. As part of the RFP process for career services, this involvement will be a deliverable, and the GRWDB also will talk with current youth and WorkFirst services vendors to determine how someone from a priority population who has received services can talk about their experiences. This has been done successfully at SETC youth meetings, and at the Somerset County CoC, operated by the Community Development Block Grant office. The GRWDB sees this as a best practice it will seek to implement on the local level.

v. One-Stop Career Center Operations -- Operational Priorities

Describe the operations of the workforce development system, including the integration of core WIOA partners to achieve strategic vision and goals, and the role of the LWDB in helping to set strategies and provide guidance that ensures alignment of operational activities. This should include details related to:

- *Adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities that reflect a diversity of service pathways and support customer choice*
- *Use of training contracts and individual training accounts that support achievement of industry-valued credentials, as well as policies and procedures for assessment of training provider performance in conjunction with the ETPL in contracting decisions and customer choice*
- *Ensuring priority of service for adult career and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient in accordance with WIOA, as well as any additional local priorities*
- *Policies and practices for providing Veterans services and prioritizing services for veterans as defined in TEGL 10-09 and NJ WINS #11-16*
- *Youth workforce development activities in the LWDA, including details about different pathways available to youth and provision of the 14 program elements through One-Stop Career Center activities, procured youth programming and activities, as well as youth programs and services that are leveraged through co-enrollment and/or other partnerships. Detail how the LWDA will satisfy the requirement that 75% of funds be*

used for Out-of-School Youth and 20% of total youth funds be used for work experience.

- Integration of technology and data to support seamless intake processes and case management, track trends and progress related to programs and participants locally; include how technology will be utilized to support engagement of participants and delivery of services.*
- Lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, actions taken and how/whether they will be maintained.*

The local policies put in place by the GRWDB board over the past several years reflect practices that in most instances have been part of the Local Area for years. They reflect the direction provided by the state and fold in some enhancements designed to better serve local clients. These policies detail priorities and procedures that, when woven together effectively by board and operational staff, will elevate the level of service provided to customers while also allowing for ongoing flexibility and implementation of new practices. The policies include:

- **AJC /One-Stop Certification, including annual accessibility assessment (2022)**
- **Conflict of Interest (2022)**
- **Incumbent Worker Training (2022)**
- **Individual Training Accounts (including Youth Co-enrollment) Policy (2022)**
- **On-the-Job Training (2022)**
- **One-Stop Career Center Complaint Procedure (2022)**
- **Pay-for-Performance Contract Strategy (2022)**
- **Personally Identifiable and Sensitive Information (PII) (2022)**
- **Priority of Service (2022)**
- **Selective Service Requirements (2019)**
- **Supportive Services (2020)**
- **Work-Based Training (2022)**
- **Youth Clients Follow Up Policy (2021)**
- **Youth Requires Additional Assistance (2022)**
- **Youth Work Experience and Incentive Payments (2022)**

Good policies lead to good governance, which:

- For **employers**, strengthens the pipeline of labor for the needs of employers, including identifying in-demand occupations, developing career pathways and establishing work-based learning programs.
- For **job seekers**, supports an integrated local One-Stop system that allows job seekers to access whatever career-related service they need from local, state and federal partner organizations, including procured and non-procured services, (and connects them to other supportive and social services as needed).
- For **service contractors**, provides a structure to receive funds that prepare job seekers for employment opportunities.

Coupled with this is an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the system partners, including governance – setting local priorities, enacting policies and monitoring operations – and operations – and service delivery, which is guided and directed by governance.

Setting priorities

In January of 2023, the GRWDB, the County of Somerset and the County of Hunterdon signed an updated Joint Agreement MOU which defines responsibilities of GRWDB Staff, GRWDB committees and the fiscal agent and indicates the procured services. In the late spring of 2023, the GRWDB will begin work on updating its Local Partner MOU which will further delineate procedures and responsibilities, including negotiated infrastructure costs. All of this is reflective of good policy and good governance leading to effective and supple service delivery. In the past four years, the GRWDB has developed a consistent brand look and marketing of all services will be done through and approved by GRWDB staff, starting in July 2023.

Keeping state guidance in mind, the One-Stop Operator's unique role is to coordinate all WIOA-required services – procured and not procured – in the One-Stop system. The One-Stop Operator is the intermediary between governance and operations, coordinating the service delivery of One-Stop partners and service providers. The One-Stop Operator is responsible for the ecosystem, or environment, in which these services operate. The One-Stop Operator position, previously procured as a part-time position, will be procured as a full-time position for Program Year 2023; it should be noted that this is a direction discussed for years by the GRWDB board, and as plans coalesced, it became a direction board members decided to enact.

It is envisioned that the Operator will have some site management responsibilities, to ensure seamless delivery of services and operational policies and procedures. This includes working with the Employment Services manager, the DVRS manager and the Career Training Services director/manager to ensure information sharing, since the offices are in separate (if nearby) buildings. There is some overlap in employment services offered by the Employment Services team and the Career Training Services team, but generally, the Career Training team works with individuals who need more intensive assistance; the One-Stop Operator will lead the coordination and communication between this team and other partners and service providers.

The GRWDB [Priority of Service Policy](#) outlines the priority groups, in alignment with WIOA. This includes Veterans, individuals with barriers to employment, youth ages 18 to 24, and the underemployed.

The role of the procured Career Training Services provider is to offer a menu of career services to customers coming into the system, including training, supportive services, career coaching, job search, resume review and the identification of candidates for work-based learning opportunities. Career Training also will aid and support additional grant initiatives that the GRWDB pursues to support and benefit community members and program participants. The provider, through its team members, will take the lead on case management of customers coming into the system looking for training opportunities. This includes adult, dislocated workers and youth being assisted through procured services, and the WorkFirst NJ population also assisted by a procured service provider. It is expected that the procured service providers will collaborate on programs and ensure that program participants are co-enrolled, so that they may benefit from the many opportunities available in the local system. This may range from work-based training for an individual who entered the system through the Learning Link, or providing a supportive service, like for paying for a certification exam, to a community member using the Metrix SkillUp Greater Raritan learning portal.

Customer choice has been a lynchpin for the Local Area and it will continue to be, guided by in-demand career pathways and occupations, including those available through OJT, incumbent worker training and apprenticeships, that provide a livable wage. All Greater Raritan training providers will continue to sign master agreements with the Local Area, and these agreements will continue to be maintained and renewed by the Career Training Services provider, which also will handle the management of individual training account contracts. As part of contracted responsibilities, the performance of training providers will be monitored by the Training Services provider, using customer feedback as well as state management tools.

Monitoring by the GRWDB of the procured service providers – the One-Stop Operator, Career Training Services, youth services, WorkFirst New Jersey and the Learning Link -- will focus on performance outcomes written into the contracts and ongoing feedback to ensure that the outcomes are being met in a timely manner. As needed, improvement plans will be implemented in a collaborative way to ensure benchmarks are met and exceeded, with a consistent focus on the achievement of operational priorities.

At the start of Program Year 2023, the GRWDB will establish a new staff position focusing on data analysis, MIS data validation and social media platforms. This new position will allow the board to more swiftly and effectively track trends and progress related to programs and participants. The position also will build on the successful outreach efforts begun over the past several years, particularly during Covid, and communicate through new methods the many programs available in the local system, how they have evolved, and how they can assist employers and job seekers in the Local Area.

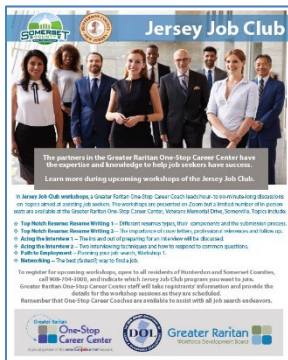
vi. **One-Stop Career Center Operations – Service Expansion and Accessibility**

Describe how the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the One-Stop delivery system, including for example, individuals in remote areas, for individuals with disabilities (compliance with Act 188), and for foreign-language speakers; include a description of how equity and equal access to services are achieved for services provided through the One-Stop system. This includes:

- *Use of technology, including virtual and adaptive technologies to support access*
- *Physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities*
- *Specialized programs and services*
- *Materials for individuals with disabilities and those with other barriers*
- *Staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities*
- *Provision of assessment services to ensure connection to best fit services (opposed to automatic referrals)*

The Covid pandemic changed how services are offered. What was once an in-person-focused system has become a system reliant on remote training, webinars and digital skills. This has assisted customers, allowing customers access when and where they want, whether it's a business which prefers a Virtual Recruitment Event or a job seeker meeting with a career navigator via a Zoom link.

This new way of doing business also has added pressure to those delivering the services. For example, the Employment Services team offering RESEA formerly did this in a group setting, which allowed one person the opportunity to deliver a message to a few dozen people at once, and then those people met with counselors. But now, each person is contacted individually and setting up the initial contact and subsequent follow-up meeting is more time-consuming. While this benefits the customers and is proving an effective way to get individuals involved in different services, it is also taking away from other services the counselors could provide to walk-in customers or to individual conversation. This is why collaboration, training and embracing new ways of providing services is more crucial than ever, on the local and regional levels.



Two members of the Employment Services team, to their credit, embraced a new way of doing things for the Jersey Job Club. This series of career-development workshops was always presented in person. In the fall of 2022, the team brought it back in a series of six workshops grouped over three Mondays each month. The workshops, focusing on resumes (two), interviewing (two), and job search / networking, can be attended remotely or in person at the Somerville office. Prospective attendees use a fillable PDF to sign up, and this information is shared on the GRWDB website, through news releases, through the local text alert service and other platforms. Attendees come from RESEA, through the Training Center and from the public. Interestingly most attendees prefer the remote attendance.

As previously noted, the Local Area offers a variety of ways to learn about services and receive programming, including the weekly Training Center orientation which is now offered via Zoom. In addition, all the documents needed for sign-up are in PDF format and can be signed electronically. Career workshops previously offered in person are offered via Zoom, allowing system partners to present at least two per month with organizations (primarily libraries) that also advertise these events to the larger community. Over the course of the past three years, partners also have expanded their outreach partners, working with more libraries and organizations interested in having presentations. For example, GRWDB staff has developed a series of outreaches for the local homeless shelter as well as the largest food-service organization serving Somerset County.

Similarly, the Business Service team's Recruitment Events which were done in person, are now done either virtually or in-person, depending on the employer's preference. The single-employer in-person recruitments are done in the Career Center in Somerville and new sector-specific recruitments with three to five employers are done with new partners – in a large conference room in 27 Warren St., where the GRWDB office is located, and with the Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce, which has a recently renovated, large meeting space in Flemington. In addition, during Covid the GRWDB conducted two Drive-Thru Job Fairs with information from about 60 employers each time. In 2022, the GRWDB partnered with a Bridgewater temple to a host 100-plus employers for an in-person Job Fair for both counties; the event attracted 500-plus job seekers and will be repeated in the spring of 2023.



In the fall of 2021, the GRWD conducted a Disabilities Summit at the local community college. This event, designed as a resource-focused fair, attracted more than 30 agencies and employers and about 70 job seekers. For 2023, the GRWDB was approached by the Somerset County Library System to partner on a Disabilities Resource Event and Job Fair it would like to conduct in the fall of 2023. Staff asked library representatives to present at the first Disabilities Committee meeting of 2023, which resulted in an expanded partnership and more support for the event, which will now be presented at a county health and wellness building. The GRWDB has committed to marketing the event to employers and then promoting it to the community as the event date nears.

In the spring of 2022, the GRWDB presented a Life After High School event at the community college. Modeled after two similar events done by North Jersey Partners in 2018, the evening, weekday event attracted more than 40 employers and about 100 youth attendees and their parents. (It also included dinner, paid for by event sponsors.) Based upon ongoing feedback from educators and agencies working with this age group, the focus was on educating attendees about the many opportunities available to them and included public conversations with employees who started at each company right after high school or community college.

Modeling dialogue

By going out to the public, the GRWDB also wanted to show community members and employers how they can be connected through the services available from the local workforce system. This model is constantly being utilized through different partnerships and can be adapted to the needs of a program's presenters and prospective participants. During ongoing meetings with other directors and with GSETA membership, there has been a constant exchange of information about these initiatives, which helps stakeholders see how these successes can be rolled out in other areas and regionally.

In 2021, new Literacy Committee collateral was translated into Spanish, and a universal translator is available for program participants. Based upon a recommendation from a recent Migrant Seasonal Farmworker monitoring, the GRWDB also will be working at the start of the 2023 Program Year to add a Spanish-language page on the GRWDB website, since this is a central source of information and can be used by the MSFW team member and clients.

Staff members with different partners are sensitive to the needs of individuals whose first language is not English. For example, Training Center staff recently encountered an individual who needed resume assistance – based upon email exchanges, they thought the customer was proficient in English but subsequently learned the person was using Google translate. Working sensitively with the customer, they were able to help. Training through GSETA and through local experts also has focused on a variety of topics that have helped different system partners embrace ways to assist individuals with different barriers, including individuals with disabilities. Key to this is listening to the individual as he or she enters the system, to ensure they are directed appropriately. This principle has undergirded the GRWDB's Pathways to Recovery program, which provides career-related assistance and supportive services to people impacted directly or indirectly by the opioid epidemic. The program's career navigator, working with the program vendor, are in constant contact to ensure that people interested in services get to them based upon what their end goals are.

The Career Training Center also hosts a weekly virtual orientation for new clients before they are connected to an individual career navigator to ensure program candidates understand the available services so that they can be connected appropriately.

These and other efforts are built around new ideas, barrier resolution, equity and collaboration. For example, as previously noted, the Chromebook loaner program for WorkFirst NJ customers has provided significant career assistance to the target population in new ways. The GRWDB director has worked with state counterparts to develop the program and has provided documentation on how the program was developed (including equipment insurance) for a half-dozen workforce boards around the state, so that it can be adopted or adapted to whatever processes and goals the local program may have.

Introduced in the winter of 2020, SkillUp Greater Raritan / Metrix Learning is used by all partners, as a way to support career learning, increase access to digital learning and achieve digital equity. SkillUp is layered into training for WorkFirst New Jersey and for all One-Stop Training Center customers accessing training grants. For the past four years, it has been used for the career-readiness training portion of the GRWDB's Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP), in which 94 individuals participated in the past three years and another 80 will participate in 2023. In 2022, a gamification module was folded into the program and for 2022 and 2023, Metrix developed program-specific badges for SYEP participants, focusing on career and digital learning. The GRWDB tracks program metrics and shares them on its performance dashboard and with all partners to understand how the program is used.

SkillUp Greater Raritan Course Analysis

Since February 2020, 3,024 individuals have registered to use SkillUp Greater Raritan. In the past year, customers added 1,787 learning tracks to their plans. More than 3,580 training hours were completed in the course tracks; 288 trackers were completed 100% with digital badges earned. Greater Raritan also added 1Huddle gaming courses for the Summer Youth Employment Program, with 57 program participants completing this new module.

Most Popular Skill Tracks

1. Active Listening
2. Email Essentials
3. Communication
4. Business Etiquette
5. Cultural Sensitivity
6. Decision Making
7. Getting Information
8. Team Skills
9. Workplace Harassment
10. Discovering Your Strengths
11. MS Excel 2019 101
12. Business Math
13. Grammar 101
14. MS Excel 2016
15. HIPAA
16. Accounting
17. Basic First Aid
18. Grammar 102
19. LinkedIn
20. Microsoft Office 365: Teams
21. MS Excel 2019 102
22. MS Word 2019 101
23. Python 101
24. Critical Thinking Essentials
25. Emotional Intelligence
26. MS Excel 2016 (Intermediate)
27. QuickBooks Pro 2017
28. Accounting Software- QuickBooks
29. Anger Management
30. Business Writing
31. MS PowerPoint 2019 101
32. Working with Difficult People
33. Administration
34. COVID-19
35. MS Office 365 101
36. Problem Solving
37. Workplace Skills
38. Academic Skills
39. Compensation and Benefits
40. Creative Thinking MS Word 2019 102
41. Professional Networking
42. Public Speaking
43. Resolving Conflicts
44. Working from Home
45. Communicating with Supervisors, Peers, or Subordinates
46. MS PowerPoint 2016
47. Presentation Skills
48. Tableau
49. Accounting Basics
50. Coaching

Most Popular Certification Tracks

1. 77-727 Microsoft Office Specialist Excel 2016
2. Certified Business Analysis Professional (CBAP)
3. 77-725 Microsoft Office Specialist: Word 2016
4. HRCI – Professional in Human Resources (PHR)
5. MO-200: Microsoft Office Excel 2019
6. 77-418 Microsoft Office Specialist - Word 2013
7. Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM)[®]
8. MO-300: Microsoft PowerPoint 2019
9. Project Management Professional (PMP)
10. MO-100: Microsoft Word 2019
11. SHRM CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL (SHRM-CP)
12. 77-731 Microsoft Office Specialist: Outlook 2016
13. ASQ – Six Sigma Yellow Belt
14. CompTIA A+ 220-1101
15. 77-729 Microsoft Office Specialist: PowerPoint 2016

Top 20 Tracks Completed 100%

Track Name	# Completed	Track Name	# Completed
Getting Started!	162	Anger Management	8
Active Listening	16	SkillUp Entry-Level Job Readiness	8
Communication	14	Grammar 101	7
Email Essentials	14	Discovering Your Strengths	6
Business Etiquette	13	MS Excel 2019 101	5
Cultural Sensitivity	13	Working with Difficult People	5
Decision Making	13	Grammar 102	4
Team Skills	12	HIPAA	4
Workplace Harassment	12	Microsoft Office Specialist - 2013	3
Getting Information	10	Administration	3

The GRWDB is continuing to expand Metrix use, including launching an Incumbent Worker Training program in the spring of 2023 that can be used by employers to retain and upskill workers. Metrix /SkillUp will remain integral to GRWDB digital education efforts.

vii. **One-Stop Career Center Operations -- Detailed Partnership and Service Integration**

Reflect on Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), Infrastructure Funding Agreements (IFAs), and ongoing practice to describe how services, costs, and customers are shared across key partners highlighted in WIOA. Identify specific goals for strengthening integrated service models for cross-training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, and other coordination efforts utilized to support service integration across required One-Stop partners, with particular attention to:

- Relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.*
- Supportive service partners, including public transportation, and other appropriate supportive services such as child care and public housing*
- State employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) around services provided in the LWDA through the one-stop delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.*
- Title II Adult education and literacy providers, including coordination of testing and services across One-Stop Career Centers and adult education providers; and literacy services provided through the Learning Link, WFNJ and other WIOA services*
- Statewide Rapid Response activities*
- The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired in serving individuals with disabilities*
- Disabled Veteran Outreach Program (DVOP) staff and Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVERs) known as Veterans Business Representatives in supporting veterans with defined significant barriers to employment*
- Any mental health programs to assist people cope and excel in a work environment*
- The steps the Board will undertake to ensure that these and any other appropriate area agreements are in place to ensure that clients may receive the assistance required to be a vital part of the economy*

Over the past several years, the GRWDB staff, at the direction of the board, has worked to create a culture that supports collaboration, identifies opportunities for innovation and builds on existing and new partnerships to provide the best service possible for those being served. This is reflected in the GRWDB's current One-Stop Partner MOU and will be the bedrock of the 2024 MOU that will be developed with partners in the coming months. The Partner-Service Matrix (Attachment 3 for reference) reflects the status of the Local Area's collaborative efforts and will be an important tool in developing linking the Local Plans and agreements.

In the current MOU, the sharing of customers and services is described, but the description of cost-sharing, highlighted in WIOA, has not been a model embraced by the Local Area. The upcoming process allows the GRWDB to build a thoughtful MOU that highlights and strengthens the values stated above, while identifying models for staff cross-training, information-sharing, and service coordination, along with possible cost-sharing methods.

As noted previously, the updated Joint Agreement signed by the two counties and the GRWDB and effective January 1, 2023, also supports integration and collaboration.

One of the unexpected benefits of Covid was the rapid adoption of virtual meetings, which, while leading to more meetings, also has led to better time allocation and opportunities to share best practices. GRWDB staff attend a half-dozen or so local meetings each month with key county committees which provide valuable ongoing opportunities for information-sharing, including the community college consortium. The GRWDB director participates in the SETC monthly Directors Meetings, as well as the state Literacy and Youth councils. The GRWDB director also sits on the GSETA Executive Committee and staff participate in GSETA operations, fiscal, monitoring and youth meetings. These meetings, largely virtually, have provided intelligence and direction that is shared back with partners and GRWDB board and committee members, which in turn creates a stronger ecosystem for effective goal setting.

This spring's bidding of One-Stop Operator and Career Training services is an opportunity to strengthen system direction, along with roles and responsibilities. The Request for Proposals process will clearly delineate expectations, service levels and deliverables for the vendor respondents, while emphasizing the collaborative culture valued by the board. With the start of the 2023 program year, GRWDB staff also is taking over the monitoring of current youth, WorkFirst New Jersey and Learning Link services, which will allow staff to further differentiate roles and bring some fresh perspective to the contract performance process.

The GRWDB will emphasize the growth of supportive services, co-enrollment of customers among all partners, and the addition of new and work-based learning opportunities for all contracted services, including WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth, WorkFirst New Jersey, and Workforce Learning Link customers, and programs led by the GRWDB. This includes the current Pathways to Recovery program and the Summer Youth Employment Program, as well as any future grants the GRWDB may pursue to benefit the community

Existing and New Education Partnerships

As noted previously, the GRWDB continues to emphasize CTE partners' connection to workforce activities. As part of these efforts, the GRWDB will work to build connections with the 46 public school districts in the two-county area to share career-related information and trends with the districts; this includes attendance at least annually at county school superintendent meetings and attendance at career events at local middle and high schools. The GRWDB also has been working to support career development connections at Somerset County Vocational and Technical High School and Hunterdon County Polytech, which each provide different career pathways programs and are expanding their physical space and programmatic activities because of state bond programs.

The GRWDB has done multiple career programs with Raritan Valley Community College, focusing on the college's Workforce Development Center and will work to connect system partners to the apprenticeship and work-based learning opportunities that individuals and employers can utilize. Toward this goal, in 2022, the GRWDB worked with the commissioner boards of Hunterdon and Somerset Counties to provide \$50,000 in American Rescue Plan funding for individual scholarships studying in-demand programs at the college. This supported 27 individuals; in 2023, the counties have committed an additional \$65,000 in ARP

funding to the Workforce Training Center programs, which focus on advanced manufacturing, welding and introductory Electrocardiograph (ECG) and Phlebotomy studies. The scholarships are need-based and include supportive services for books and exams. The program, like other workforce training initiatives, is performance- and outcome-based, and several of the participants have used this as a ladder introduction to more advanced studies.

“The scholarship makes such a huge difference in allowing me to continue my studies and pursue better opportunities,” an ECG student said after completing the course. “I was recently accepted into the nursing program at RVCC, and this scholarship goes a long way in allowing me to fund my studies as well as living expenses as I continue through this journey.”

As an example of service integration, scholarship participants fill out the New Jersey intake form, so that they can be enrolled in America’s One-Stop Operating System (AOSOS), and co-enrolled in other workforce services as the need arises.

The GRWDB’s efforts to knit together literacy service providers more effectively has included having Somerset County act as a site for testing classes during the fall of 2021, because of covid challenges. A shared resource document of available classes and related information was developed and is now shared between the Title II education and literacy providers and nonprofit literacy providers in the Local Area, and the board elected to support the Learning Link provider with \$21,000 in WIOA funding after Learning Link dollars were decreased for Program Year 2022. In addition, during the program year, further support was directed to the Learning Link provider as services levels increased, and GRWDB staff successfully advocated with state partners for additional funding for Program Year 2022 because of ongoing need. In one other literacy effort, the GRWDB proposed using Somerset County ARP dollars to support a regional literacy navigator position, to help manage the increased numbers being served by nonprofit and Title II providers and connect clients to the Local Area’s workforce and social-service programs. This effort also was approved and will begin in the spring of 2023.

Detailed role development will continue to be a vital standard operating procedure for the GRWDB and its systems partners, so that customers are directed to the needed services, whether it be expanded supportive services offered by the Training Center or another program partners, reentry services offered through Employment Services, veterans services offered through state partners, and disabilities services offered through different private and public partners. This direction is coupled with the Local Area’s robust community of non-profits and non-governmental agencies that are directly and in-directly connected to workforce development efforts, and the GRWDB will continue to educate this community on available services. It should be noted that the GRWDB already uses this model with different partners, including the library systems in the two counties as well as the United Way of Northern New Jersey, whose ALICE initiative undergirds the expansion of local service priorities.

Through diverse representation on the Board, through a thoughtful and expansive MOU with One-Stop Partners, through carefully constructed contracts with vendors, and through partnerships and collaborations among staff, county agencies and state partners, the GRWDB is engaged with entities carrying out core and ancillary programs that support strong service integration and ensure that clients receive the assistance needed to be a vital part of the economy.

viii. **One-Stop Career Center Operations: Employer Engagement**

Describe the strategies and services that will be used to effectively serve employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations. Specifically, highlight how your strategy seeks to:

- *Facilitate engagement of employers, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations, in workforce development programs.*
- *Support a local workforce development system that meets businesses needs in the region and LWDA.*
- *Better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development, including coordination of local workforce investment with regional economic development activities, and the promotion of entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services*
- *Create linkage during program delivery between individual customers and employers.*
- *Align resources at the state, regional, and local level to create a system of services, supports, and solutions for employers that benefit for jobseekers and workers in NJ*
- *Expand implementation of a variety of work-based learning opportunities and programs, including Incumbent Worker Training, On-the-Job Training, Transitional Jobs, Pre-Apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship opportunities*
- *Leverage local career pathway initiatives, business intermediaries, economic development organizations, and other local industry and sector strategies*
- *Leverage additional state programs and grants through the NJDOL's Business Services, Apprenticeship, and Industry Partnership units*

A robust economy that puts job seekers in good-paying, career-pathway positions, helps everyone, and New Jersey's local, county and state workforce partners are constantly collaborating to develop and promote new programs to support employers and understand the current and future needs of businesses. As part of this statewide ecosystem, the GRWDB aims to understand what is happening now locally while developing a working relationship with employers to understand future goals. GRWDB staff and system partners also communicate trends and best practices to employers and provide connections to appropriate services.

As part of these free programs and services, the GRWDB and NJDOL can provide funding and resources to support businesses and non-profit organizations in Hunterdon and Somerset Counties. The programs -- job postings and job fairs, On-the-Job Training, Incumbent Worker Training, SkillUp Greater Raritan and many more -- assist employers with hiring, training and retention.

Integral system partners are the NJDOL's Business Services Representatives (BSR), who are focused on the needs of employers. They connect employers to different state and regional resources, from special job-funding opportunities to a Job Match Project, in-person and virtual Recruitment Events and much more.

We Mean Business

The Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board and state system partners provide funding, services and resources to support businesses and non-profit organizations in Hunterdon and Somerset Counties with hiring, training and retention needs.

How the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development Assists with Recruitment and Hiring

Job postings and job fairs: Job seekers can find job postings and job fairs on the NJDOL's website and local job boards. The NJDOL also provides job seekers with information on job openings and job fairs.

Virtual Job Fairs and Information Sessions: Events hosted by employers, NJDOL and other partners to provide job seekers with information on job openings and job fairs.

On-the-Job Training: A program that provides job seekers with on-the-job training and experience. The NJDOL provides funding for on-the-job training and experience.

Incumbent Worker Training: A program that provides job seekers with on-the-job training and experience. The NJDOL provides funding for on-the-job training and experience.

Transitional Jobs: A program that provides job seekers with on-the-job training and experience. The NJDOL provides funding for on-the-job training and experience.

Registered Apprenticeship: A program that provides job seekers with on-the-job training and experience. The NJDOL provides funding for on-the-job training and experience.

How the Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board Assists with Hiring and Training Costs

On-the-Job Training: A program that provides job seekers with on-the-job training and experience. The NJDOL provides funding for on-the-job training and experience.

Incumbent Worker Training: A program that provides job seekers with on-the-job training and experience. The NJDOL provides funding for on-the-job training and experience.

Transitional Jobs: A program that provides job seekers with on-the-job training and experience. The NJDOL provides funding for on-the-job training and experience.

Registered Apprenticeship: A program that provides job seekers with on-the-job training and experience. The NJDOL provides funding for on-the-job training and experience.

How the Greater Raritan Workforce Development Board Assists with Training Costs

On-the-Job Training: A program that provides job seekers with on-the-job training and experience. The NJDOL provides funding for on-the-job training and experience.

Incumbent Worker Training: A program that provides job seekers with on-the-job training and experience. The NJDOL provides funding for on-the-job training and experience.

Transitional Jobs: A program that provides job seekers with on-the-job training and experience. The NJDOL provides funding for on-the-job training and experience.

Registered Apprenticeship: A program that provides job seekers with on-the-job training and experience. The NJDOL provides funding for on-the-job training and experience.

Contact Us

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The GRWDB is fortunate to have a productive relationship with the state local BSR as well as the local veterans business counterpart. Over the past three years, the GRWDB has worked with the BSRs to design branded collateral for different services and programs, including the one-page flyer on the preceding page or for the more than 100 recruitments conducted in the past 18 months. The Recruitment Events are done either virtually or in-person, depending on the employer's preference. The single-employer in-person recruitments are done in the Career Center in Somerville and new sector-specific recruitments with three to five employers are done with new partners – in a large conference room in the Somerset County Human Services building at 27 Warren St., Somerville (where the GRWDB office is located), and with the Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce, which has a recently renovated, large meeting space in Flemington. The locations were established through the relationships GRWDB staff members have with the hosts. The results of these efforts are shared at board meetings and in the GRWDB's Performance Dashboard. The local BSR also participates in board and committee meetings, provided business feedback to partners.



In addition, the BSR has supported GRWDB-led events, including the Life After High School resource job fair in April 2022, and the 2022 Greater Raritan conducted in May at a Bridgewater Hindu temple, with 100-plus employers and more than 500 job seekers in attendance. (The temple is right off Interstate 78 and just a few miles from the Hunterdon County border.) GRWDB staff and the BSR began planning for May 2023 event in the winter, even as additional recruitments and other events rolled in fast and furious.

This relationship works because of ongoing conversation between all parties. The GRWDB director recently met with the BSR and the On-the-Job Training (OJT) writer for the Local Area to review the flow for queries regarding OJT contracts by employers, since each partner offers options that are largely similar but do carry a few permutations. The open conversation proved helpful, and the parties came away with an agreement that while the process may change depending upon staffing future changes, the focus will remain on the employer customer. This collaborative model also is used with other state partners, including the regional DVRS business representative, who sits on the GRWDB Disabilities Committee and provides a regularly updated list of DVRS-friendly businesses to committee members.

Employers can learn about these and other state-focused programs during "Lunch and Learn," a service for employers from the BRSs serving seven Central Jersey Regions counties. An experienced team led by the Central Regional Coordinator hosts a monthly virtual information session touching on key services and programs. This idea was started in the Local Area by the coordinator who was then a local BSR and was expanded regionally; a related [employer survey](#) to help build awareness and participation is on the GRWDB website

On the topic of surveys, to understand the skills needs of employers in Hunterdon and Somerset counties, the GRWDB posted an on-going survey that aims to help the board understand how it can direct local resources. The brief survey focusing on hiring and job skills needs can be found [here](#), and is for employers of all sizes. Survey results are shared on an ongoing basis with the GRWDB's board and committees.

What employers want

The GRWDB has long been focused on engaging a variety of partners with a specific focus on ensuring that the workforce delivery system in the Local Area understand the needs of employers. This includes the establishment in 2020 and 2022 of local Incumbent Worker Training and On-the-Job Training policies, which GRWDB staff work to activate through the assistance of the BSR and local partners. In addition, in the second half of the Program Year 2022, the GRWDB is introduced an Incumbent Worker Training using Skillup Greater Raritan to employers. With these efforts, the outreach and contracts are managed by GRWDB staff while any individual case management, including AOSOS processing and connecting to supportive services, is managed by Career Training Services. The One-Stop helps coordinate communication and ensure that all partners are aware of these opportunities.

The GRWDB team has created a direct connection between workforce development and delivery and economic development activities in the local area. In addition to having senior executives from major companies in the region, members of three regional business entities, the Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce, Hunterdon County Economic Development and the Somerset County Office of Planning, Policy and Economic Development, sit on the board.

GRWDB staff members have presented at Hunterdon County Chamber and Somerset County Business Partnership events and continue to participate in a number of regional and statewide business-focused efforts, including the Apprenticeship Council, North Jersey Partners, NJDOL's Industry Partnership initiative, and the community college / NJBIA Pathways to Career Opportunities initiative. GRWDB staff members have broadened their outreach with participation in HRSA business-focused events to get people in the care sector pipeline and a recent NJBAC Resource event at the community college. The GRWDB also has supported municipal job fairs, as a way to reach out to small and micro business enterprises which help create a vibrant economic environment for job creation.

GRWDB team members are always looking for new opportunities. Recently, the New Jersey SBDC was reorganized, with regional directors at several locations around the state. Prior to covid, a local SBDC center was at the community college; now the regional centers are in neighboring counties, one serving Hunterdon County business owners and another serving Somerset County business owners. After seeing a note about this in the GRWDB director's weekly email to board and committee members and team members, the Somerset County administrator asked that a meeting be convened. From this meeting, a new collaboration was born, with discussions on how to bring SBDC services to a physical location in Somerset County while also showing businesses how they can take advantage of the existing counseling services, which can be done remotely. As part of the discussion, SBDC staff members also said they could work with the GRWDB to present work-based tutorials to local businesses, to help them complete needed paperwork. It is this type of alignment the GRWDB team will continue to focus on and develop in the coming months and years.

All employer-related local, county, state and national information and services also is housed on the [Resources – Employers tab of the GRWDB website](#). The page is updated and refreshed regularly and promoted as a single point of information for employers in the two counties.

ix. **Local WDB Structure and Functions – Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) Structure:**

Describe the structure of your LWDA and governance entities, including identifying:

- *Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) Membership. Include a list of members and indicate alignment with SETC policy #2015-01 and WIOA. Include description of how membership aligns with New Jersey key industries and LWDA priorities. Discuss recruitment plans to address any deficiencies.*
- *LWDB standing committees and their specific responsibilities*
- *Fiscal Agent responsible for the disbursement and oversight of grant funds, as determined by the chief elected official or the Governor.*
- *Hired staff supporting the Local WDB, including specific information about roles and responsibilities*

The GRWDB is established under a Joint Agreement between the Boards of County Commissioners of Hunterdon and Somerset Counties. The agreement, signed by the commission directors of the counties and the GRWDB Board Chair, was first entered into on January 31, 2003. It has been updated several times, and the most recent update of the [Joint Agreement was signed by all parties and entered into on January 1, 2023.](#)

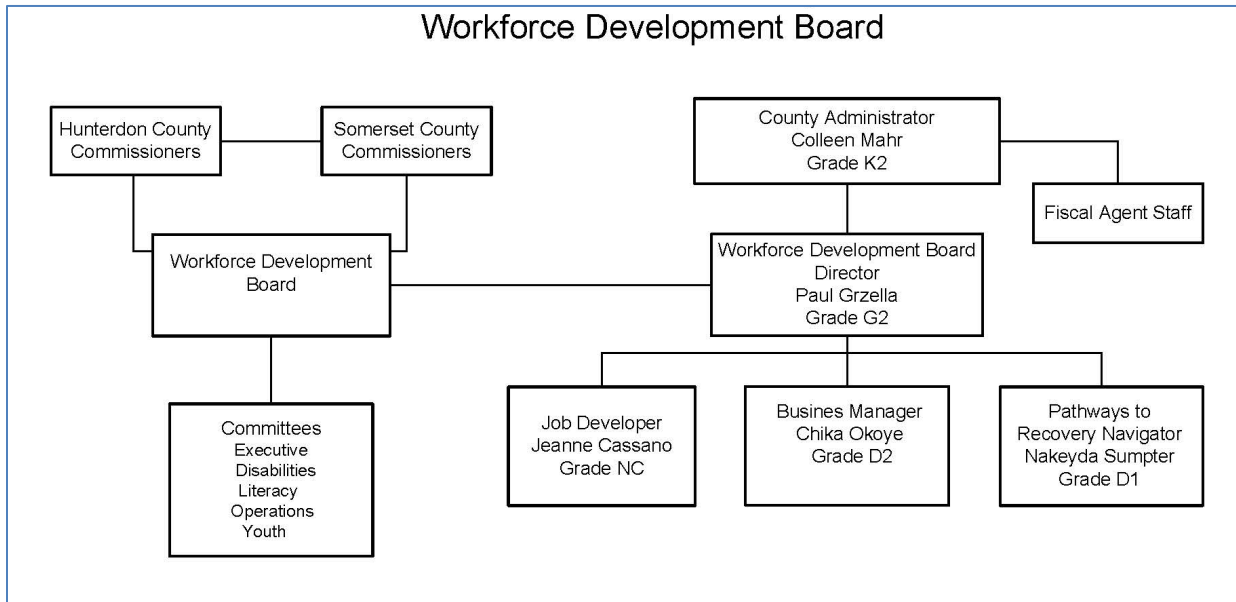
Among other provisions, the Joint Agreement:

- Establishes GRWDB Member appointments, and GRWDB Board responsibilities.
- Designates staff and committee structures. These committees include an Executive Committee, a Disabilities Committee, a Literacy Committee, an Operations Committee and a Youth Committee; the board chair also can establish ad hoc committees as needed, including (but not limited to) committees to assist with procurement content review and response review, and monitoring.
- Designates the County of Somerset, New Jersey as the Grant Recipient and Fiscal Agent.
- Requires the GRWDB to develop a four-year Local Plan and participate in the development of a four-year Regional Plan.

The GRWDB is responsible for the planning and oversight of the local One-Stop system in the two counties. This includes working with the Chief Elected Official (CEO) of Somerset County and the Governor to get agreement on local Performance Standards. As part of the Joint Agreement, the GRWDB also will:

- Competitively select a One-Stop Operator.
- Competitively select providers of Career Training Services, Youth Services, WorkFirst New Jersey services and Workforce Learning Link services.
- With agreement of the CEO, enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Local Area's One-Stop Partners for the development and operation of comprehensive One-Stop Centers in the two counties.

This Fiscal Agent, a member of the Somerset County Finance Department, reviews monthly expenditure reports and cash drawdowns, all of which are compiled and prepared by the GRWDB business and finance manager. The Fiscal Agent is also available to answer questions and assist with any issues that may arise throughout the course of program year, to ensure that all money paid out by the county for programmatic services is reimbursed. GRWDB staff also prepare the annual budget and budgets for any additional grant responses; these are also reviewed by the Fiscal Agent as a second set of eyes, to ensure nothing was missed; the agent does not have input on any part on program development, implementation or expenses. The organizational chart below details the reporting structure and the composition of board staff.



The board staff, following the Joint Agreement, are employees of Somerset County and follow Somerset County human resource policies. Staff members include:

- **Director**, who manages the day-to-day operations of the GRWDB and works with different partners, including (but not limited to): the One-Stop Operator; the commissioner boards, business entities and governmental agencies in both counties; colleagues in neighboring LWDBs; and various state agencies directly or indirectly involved with the workforce system. The director also manages the GRWDB website, writes news releases and social media posts and oversees the staff. The director reports to the GRWDB Executive Committee and the Somerset County administrator.
- **Business and Finance Manager**, who handles processing of payments for GRWDB expenses through the Somerset County fiscal management system; the manager is also responsible for expenditure reports and cash drawdown and reporting on expenditures at board meetings.
- **Job Developer**, who works with a variety of state and local partners on a variety of projects, including Job Matching with the BRSs, outreach at various public meetings events as well as attendance of different governmental agencies connected to workforce development, and assistance to job seekers and businesses. This position is also responsible for the coordination of the annual Summer Youth Employment Program, which runs from June to October and includes months of preplanning.

- **Pathways to Recovery Career Navigator**, who is responsible for direct service outreach and assistance to program participants as well as coordination with Prevention Links, the program vendor. The navigator also connects participants to Career Training Services as appropriate.

For the past two summers, the GRWDB also has hosted a youth participant of the Summer Youth Employment Program who has helped with various office tasks. This will continue in 2023.

For Program Year 2023, the GRWDB anticipates:

- Evolving the Job Developer duties, to focus solely on business outreach and program support as well as the lead on contract monitoring procedures with the current program vendors as well as the vendor for Career Training Services.
- Having the Business Manager take on vendor-contract payments currently being done by a team member of the current Career Training Services provider.
- Adding a new position focusing on data analysis, MIS validation and assistance with board website maintenance and social media outreach.
- The director having a more direct role in working with the One-Stop Operator, which is becoming a full-time vended position. The text alert system currently being maintained by the Training Center will be maintained by the One-Stop Operator.

As noted previously, the GRWDB follows the policies of Somerset County, but staff members work to ensure a separation between county and staff work. For example, the GRWDB follows the purchasing format used by Somerset County, but the content of the scope of any RFP is determined by the board and not by county staff, who review document for consistency, clarity and conformity to needed support documents. The GRWDB works to maintain balance with the various governmental agencies and departments it interacts with, always working to ensure that all policy decisions and One-Stop oversight remain solely with the board.

Board membership

Board membership follows guidance laid out in enabling legislation and in the Joint Agreement. The board includes representation from individuals living and working in both counties and has achieved the 51 percent requirement of business members. This is supported by mandated partners working in or supporting workforce development initiatives. Current members include:

Business Members (51 percent)

- Chair, Joanne Hala, Associate Director, United Way of Northern New Jersey
- Vice Chair Michelle Satanik, EWR Assistant Property Manager, Facilities, OTG
- Ram Abarasan, President, Deni Realty, LLC
- Laura Begg, Senior Director Talent Management and Leadership Development – Zelis
- Adriana Bury, Head of North America Talent Management, Sanofi
- Sejal Dave Sharma, Director of Business Development, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset

- Violet Kocsis, Chief Human Resources Officer, Hunterdon Healthcare System
- Maureen Kurdziel, Vice President, American Arbitration Association
- Clay Mason, East West Group
- Christopher Phelan, President/CEO, Hunterdon County Chamber of Commerce
- Marc Saluk, Economic Development Director, Hunterdon County
- Nichelle Santos, Legacy's Future Insurance, founder/CEO
- Tyler Seville, executive director, Innovation New Jersey

Economic Development (1 member required)

- Jessica Paolini, Manager of Economic Development, Somerset County

Organized Labor and Community-Based Organizations: 20% required

- Fran Leddy, Hunterdon County Educational Services Commission
- Daniel Sebban, Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters Representative
- Mark Valli, CEO, Norwescap

Education Representatives: 3 required members

- A.D. Amar, Professor of Business, Seton Hall University
- Jacki Belin, Vice President of Student Affairs, Raritan Valley Community College
- Todd Bonsall, Superintendent, Hunterdon County Vocational School District
- Christina Shockley, Apprenticeships Coordinator

Government partners: 2 required members

- Peter Curley, Manager, NJDOL Employment Services Representatives
- Danielle Kwan, DJDOL Vocational Rehabilitation Services Representative
- Meagan O'Reilly, Director, Hunterdon County Human Services

Ex-officio members:

- Jeff Kuhl, Commissioner Liaison, Hunterdon County
- Christopher Peake, One-Stop Operator, Greater Raritan One Stop Career Center
- Douglas Singleterry, Commissioner Liaison, Somerset County

While the County Commissioners contribute to board discussions, they do not vote at any meetings, and do not participate in the Executive Committee. The responsibilities of board and committee members and meeting structure are outlined in the GRWDB's [Member Handbook and Orientation Guide](#), and further details are in the [board's bylaws](#). Both documents are also hyperlinked on the [About – Board and Committees](#) page of the GRWDB website, which also lists all board member and other details about roles and responsibilities.

Board business membership aligns with two of the largest healthcare employers in both counties, although it is an ongoing challenge to get other aligned businesses to stay connected. In two instances, manufacturing representatives have declined board membership but stay connected with regular board meeting attendance. In the past two years, small business board membership has increased, including a business owner focusing on cannabis.

All board and committee meetings, along with attendant meeting packages with hyperlinked agendas, are housed on [Events – Meeting Packages](#) tab of the GRWDB website. Each agenda includes extensive meeting minutes of the previous meeting. The meeting schedule for the year is at the top of the page and all meetings are listed in the [Events – Calendar](#) tab of the website. Upcoming meetings are highlighted in the GRWDB's weekly email to board, committee and local team members.

GRWDB staff also take every opportunity to invite potential new members to all board meetings and ask current board members to be advocates for GRWDB involvement.

The GRWDB continuously reviews industry representation. The focus is on having individuals with the interest, knowledge and background necessary to set workforce development policy and provide oversight of workforce investment grants and programs in the Local Area. The GRWDB considers membership recruitment to be an on-going effort and has developed and maintains a prospective member application process. Once considered, the GRWDB then engages in a recommendation process, requesting appointment of a prospective member by the appropriate Commissioner Boards in either county.

In Somerset County, interested individuals also can put in their name for consideration for board membership through a portal on the county website.

Statewide, WDB directors regularly discuss best practices for recruiting and maintaining board membership and have discussed setting up regional meetings to share best practices and support committee structures between areas: so, if one Local Area has a particularly strong Disabilities Committee, for example, that committee may be able to work across contiguous areas or share how it reached success.

Similarly, directors have been sharing documents and policies to support one another. As an example, two local areas asked to see the GRWDB governance policies built in 2022, in order to not duplicate work but provide some consistency. Several local areas also have shared their documentation for OJTs and Incumbent Worker Training contracts with the GRWDB, as a way to help businesses have a consistent experience across multiple counties.

This type of information sharing also has been discussed at GSETA meetings and directors are looking for ways to identify efficiencies that support a supple structure that promotes accessibility, flexibility and enhanced performance.

x. **Local WDB Structure and Functions – Procurement of Operator and Services**

Describe the process for engaging in competitive procurement processes that align with LWDA strategies and priorities and support the competitive selection of Title I sub-recipients, including

- *One Stop Career Service Providers - Support provision of the full range of career services highlighted under WIOA in the local One Stop system, including provision of work-based learning, supportive services, and career coaching*

- *One-Stop Operators – Serves as the One-Stop system builder, supporting coordination of services across required and other partners.*
- *Youth Service Providers - Provide services supporting program elements that fall outside of the expertise and services being provided by One Stop Career Center staff.*

The One-Stop Operator's unique role is to coordinate all WIOA-required services – procured and not procured – in the One-Stop system. The One-Stop Operator is the intermediary between governance and operations, coordinating the service delivery of One-Stop partners and service providers. The One-Stop Operator is responsible for the ecosystem, or environment, in which these services operate. As mentioned previously, the One-Stop Operator position, previously procured as a part-time position, will be procured as a full-time position for Program Year 2023; it should be noted that this is a direction discussed for years by the GRWDB board, and as plans coalesced, it became a direction board members decided to enact.

It is envisioned that the Operator will have some site management responsibilities, to ensure seamless delivery of services and operational policies and procedures. This includes working with the Employment Services manager, the DVRS manager and the Career Training Services director/manager to ensure information sharing, since the offices are in separate (if nearby) buildings. There is some overlap in employment services offered by the Employment Services team and the Career Training Services team, but generally, the Career Training team works with individuals who need more intensive assistance; the One-Stop Operator will lead the coordination and communication between this team and other partners and service providers.

The role of the procured Career Training Services provider is to offer a menu of career services to customers coming into the system, including supportive services, career coaching, job search, resume review and the identification of candidates for work-based learning opportunities. Career Training also will aid and support additional grant initiatives that the GRWDB pursues to support and benefit community members and program participants. The provider, through its team members, will take the lead on case management of customers coming into the system looking for training opportunities. This includes adult, dislocated workers and youth being assisted through procured services, and the WorkFirst NJ population also assisted by a procured service provider.

It is expected that the procured service providers will collaborate on programs and ensure that program participants are co-enrolled, so that they may benefit from the many opportunities available in the local system. This may range from work-based training for an individual who entered the system through the Learning Link, or providing a supportive service to a community member using the Metrix SkillUp Greater Raritan learning portal.

In a MOU dating from 2014, the Somerset County Human Services Department was designated as the Career Training Services provider. The updated MOU which went into effect on January 1, 2023, removes that designation and requires that the Career Training Services be among the procured services of the GRWDB. Other procured services in the MOU include One-Stop Operator, WorkFirst New Jersey, Workforce Learning Link and Youth Services, which the GRWDB has procured through a competitive process for several years.

It should be noted that the GRWDB has used a competitive bidding process for the a part-time One Stop Operator since 2017. The GRWDB entered into a new two-year contract for the part-time One-Stop Operator on July 1, 2022. In January of 2023, the contract vendor, the Somerset County Department of Human Services, was notified that the contract was being ended a year early so that the position can be rebid.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) for a full-time One-Stop Operator and a Career Training Services provider was shared with the full board on March 23, 2023, and approved by the GRWDB Executive Committee on March 30, 2023. (Board members representing possible RFP respondents were asked to recuse themselves from all discussions.) The scope of services for both was developed by GRWDB staff, based on ongoing feedback from board members, the previous One-Stop Operator RPFs, and the governance training modules issued by the state throughout the winter of 2023. Subsequent conversations with the state training consult supported this week, as did discussions with other LWDB directors around the state and nation.

The creation of this new Local Plan also was instrumental in the development of the RFP. The Local Plan defines the operational procedures for the GRWDB, and the scopes outlined in the RFP must align with the Local Plan's strategies and procedure. As stated previously, the RFP will follow the procurement procedures of Somerset County, with the GRWDB using the county template and amending it to fit the needs of the RFP. Neither the purchasing department or any other entity or individual with either county can comment on the contents of the scope or deliverables of the RFP; that is the sole responsibility of GRWDB board members.

The RFP will be issued by the GRWDB on Wednesday, April 5, 2023, with legal notices in the local paper and links to the RFP on the GRWDB website. To ensure a competitive procurement process, the RFP link will be shared on social media posts, through the GRWDB spring newsletter and through news releases. Questions and clarifications are due on April 19, 2023, with addenda issues on April 24. Responses are due on May 5, 2023. The responses will be reviewed and scored by a GRWDB Board subcommittee following established GRWDB RFP procedures. This includes signing a conflict-of-interest statement. A report on the subcommittee's decision will be completed on May 12, and be given to the Executive Committee for review and a decision by May 17. When the vendors for the services are chosen, the GRWDB will enter into final negotiations regarding the contract's requirements. It is envisioned that the One-Stop Operator and Career Training Services roles will be assumed by the vendors on July 1, 2023. In the event vendors are not chosen, the current contract and arrangement will continue, and the competitive procurement process will be redone.

The GRWDB's current contracts with Youth, WorkFirst New Jersey and Workforce Learning Link services will continue uninterrupted. The RFP for Career Training Services also links back to these vendors, since these vendors must work with the Career Training navigators who provide case management for the vendors' customers and connect the customers to WIOA services. The competitive procurement procedure was followed for these contracts and included review by GRWDB board and staff members. Monitoring of those contracts and the processing of payments, currently done by the Career Training Services team, will be taken back by GRWDB staff; GRWDB board members also will be involved in the monitoring process. Further details on the monitoring process are shared in the Local Plan's next section.

xi. Local WDB Structure and Functions: Oversight and Monitoring

Please describe how the LWDB monitors and oversees the Local workforce strategies, priorities, and systems identified in regional and local plans and aligned with local policies and guidance for purposes of continuous improvement and accountability. Areas of monitoring and oversight include:

- The operation of One Stop Career Centers, specifically American Job Center certification, as outlined by SETC Policy #2016-14.*
- Budgets of procured providers.*
- Participation, service delivery, and outcomes of procured providers.*
- Training (ITA) contacts*
- Work-based learning contracts and agreements (OFT, IWT, Transitional Jobs, Youth Work Experience)*
- Systems supporting business practices – e.g., employer engagement, accessibility of services*
- Include details about processes for monitoring all the above. How does the LWDB draw on quantitative and qualitative data to ensure accountability and support the continuous improvement of services for WIOA/One Stop customers – including jobseekers/workers and employers?*
- Describe the structure and staffing of monitoring and compliance activities in your LWDB, including specific details about the roles and responsibilities of LWDB members, LWDB staff, and/or other entities.*
- Include specifics on how monitoring is built into annual processes of the LWDB, including the ETPL and Quality Assurance frameworks, data from AOSOS, Futureworks and other systems, and Qualitative data collection and visits by the LWDB.*
- Ensure your plan provides specific details on the LWDB's process to complete American Job Center (AJC)/One-Stop Certification, and detail how monitoring results will be reported and shared across various system partners and stakeholders.*

The GRWDB approved an American Job Centers (AJC)/One Stop Certification Policy at its June 23, 2022, meeting. [This policy](#) can be found on the About – Mission, Policies and Strategic Priorities tab of the GRWDB website. The certification is based on established criteria and the extent to which the One-Stop provides programs and services in the Local Area that enable that area to satisfy or exceed performance and quality service criterion.

Additionally, a policy addendum on ADA compliance and accessibility assessments for individuals with disabilities, per NJWIN 17-16 was approved. In June 2017, the Greater Raritan One-Stop Career Center instituted a Policy and Procedures for Serving Individuals with Barriers to Employment. The GRWDB has incorporated this policy into its AJC / One-Stop Certification process, and the GRWDB and its partners will follow the procedures detailed in the ADA Policy. The programmatic assessment is an opportunity for the GRWDB to identify gaps in accessibility within the One-Stops and take corrective action to address these gaps. The GRWDB will use this assessment as an opportunity to initiate a cycle of continuous improvement in providing access in the local One-Stop system.

With the spring 2023 bidding of One-Stop Operator and Career Training Services there is an opportunity to strengthen system direction, along with roles and responsibilities. While not a definitive reset, the Request for Proposals process will clearly delineate expectations, service levels and deliverables for vendor respondents. The GRWDB will be taking over the monitoring process with the new fiscal year which will allow staff to differentiate roles and bring fresh perspectives to the local contract performance process. Monitoring by the GRWDB of the procured service providers – the One-Stop Operator, Career Training Services, Youth services, WorkFirst New Jersey and the Learning Link – will focus on performance outcomes written into the contracts and ongoing feedback to ensure outcomes are being met in a timely manner. Improvement plans will be implemented in a collaborative way to ensure benchmarks are met and exceeded, with a consistent focus on the achievement of operational priorities.

The current model of monitoring which is done by the Department of Human Services/One Stop Career Training Center provides technical assistance as part of the overall service coordination. This technical assistance includes satisfaction surveys, facilitation coordination between programs under contract, developing forms, providing information about other funding sources, and providing letters of support for other funding applications. As the monitor of the One-Stop Operator, Career Training Services, Youth services, WorkFirst New Jersey and the Learning Link – the GRWDB will offer similar services. The satisfaction surveys will continue to be initiated by the Training Center service provider, but the survey, the process for administration of the survey and the results of the survey will be reported each month in the service report. The survey will need Board approval as will the process, advising the provider that the survey needs to be offered to every client and the tabulated results should include the number of no responses as well as the responses and highlights of information provided by the client. The GRWDB works collaboratively with all the system partners and will continue to facilitate coordination between the programs, organizations and staffs. The One-Stop Operator and Career Training Services will provide the GRWDB with a sample of program forms to be reviewed and updated as needed to ensure that they reflect the services that are mission driven.

Monitoring Process Overview

In the spring of 2023, as part of its ongoing governance training for LWDB staff and board members, a module focusing on contract monitoring will be issued. With that in mind, the GRWDB has developed a tentative process for contract monitoring which will begin in July, with the start of Program Year 2023.

The Program Monitoring Committee (PMC) of the GRWDB will be comprised of the GRWDB Director, the GRWDB Business Manager, a GRWDB Board member, and the GRWDB Monitoring – Business Outreach Coordinator. The GRWDB Director may assign additional staff to the PMC, as needed.

Each contracted provider will work with the Monitor Coordinator from the PMC who is responsible for coordinating the monitoring of that provider's contracted programs and writing the final report. For single providers with multiple contracts, the Monitor Coordinator will complete a single report for all the agency's contracted programs.

A team of one to three PMC members will be assigned to each contracted agency to participate in monitoring of contracted programs. At a minimum, each team member is responsible for peer review of the Monitoring Report.

The PMC will meet in the summer of each year to determine the program monitoring schedule through the end of the program year (June 30 of the following year). Review dates and site visits will be entered and tracked on the Master Schedule and the GRWDB will have the final authority to request due dates for review of specific programs.

PMC member duties will include:

- A review of documents to determine compliance with grant guidelines, quality and fiscal timeliness. Required documents include: proposal; contract; prior year performance report, if applicable; contracted level of services; year-to-date level of service; and audit. Other documents be requested as needed.
- A site visit, which is required for all contracts. Any questions that arise from review of documents should be addressed with the agency/program director during the site visit. During the visit, customer files will be reviewed at each agency being monitored.
- A Program Monitoring Report. The Monitoring Coordinator, with the input from the monitoring team, will document all findings and recommendations pertaining to grant compliance, program quality, and fiscal timeliness of contracted programs.
- A presentation to the PMC. The Monitoring Coordinator will present the report for review by the PMC on the date according to the Master Schedule. The Monitoring Coordinator will provide the PMC members with a copy of the report at least three business days prior to the PMC meeting, and any changes agreed upon by the committee should be included in the final report.
- Agency Follow-up. The Monitoring Coordinator will provide the contracted agency with a copy of the report and request a written agency response based on the findings and recommendations. The Monitoring Coordinator will advise the agency that technical assistance is available as needed, and will follow up to make sure the agency response is returned in a timely manner. All documents related to this response will be stored electronically.

Other monitoring requirements

In addition to the yearly Monitoring Process the GRWDB contract monitoring will require the contracted providers to submit monthly reports that include the updates on the performance metrics outlined in the contract. The update can include the community/monthly outreach activities, clients served, referrals, contacts called/emailed/visited, client activities as dictated by the provider contract.

Youth Program vendors will meet with the GRWDB staff monthly to better monitor the outreach/referral process for the youth programming. At a minimum, quarterly meetings are anticipated with the vendors of WorkFirst New Jersey and Workforce Learning Link services.

The yearly budgets of procured providers are included in the RFP. Monthly finance reports are provided by the provider along with the activities report for review and submission to the

providers contract file. These monthly reports, along with the yearly monitoring process ensures that the service delivery and outcomes are on track and in accordance with the signed yearly contract. The monthly reports allow the GRWDB to provide ongoing monitoring of the service providers and an opportunity to offer technical assistance as needed for the work-based learning contracts and agreements. The GRWDB will monitor all Training (ITA) contracts monthly as part of the vendor's invoicing process.

Monitoring based in data

The GRWDB will continue to draw on quantitative and qualitative data to ensure accountability and support the continuous improvement of services for WIOA/One-Stop customers – including jobseekers/workers and employers. This will be the primary responsibility of a new staff member who will concentrate their efforts on data analysis, MIS validation and social media. The GRWDB utilizes data information in the procurement process and decision-making for a robust understanding of the local economy which enables the Board to align workforce and economic initiatives while generating policy based on the needs of local employers as well as the intelligence gathered from system partners. To help inform and provide data for decision making, the GRWDB staff compiles and reviews custom data reports from state partners and reviews analysis of trends in employment, human resource management and workforce delivery efforts in general. Data sets, labor market information and analysis hold a prominent space on the GRWDB website, under the Resources tab. Updated, timely information is regularly downloaded to the website, and reports are provided to the board members on a quarterly basis, and in weekly resource emails sent out to the GRWDB contacts in Hunterdon and Somerset counties. Data is also highlighted in news releases about programs, in GRWDB newsletters and the GRWDB Annual Report.

The NJDOL's Office of Research and Information provides a host of regularly updated labor market information data sets to the GRWDB quarterly and as needed. The area's labor market analyst is available to help the GRWDB staff with market-specific requests initiated by different parties, including businesses, schools, and individuals. The Somerset County Office of GIS, which built and maintains the GRWDB Unemployment Tracker, created a second searchable map application focusing on the top 25 employers in Hunterdon and Somerset Counties with the most job postings in a quarterly period. This information can inform the community, the counties, employers, and individuals of employment trends and assists the GRWDB in its planning and service provision.

Among key state resources is the Labor Demands Occupation List. The list is used in different ways to support many programs, including approval for training courses for those in the One-Stop system. While the labor demand occupation list is based on a comprehensive analysis of supply and demand factors on a statewide basis, state officials recognize that local labor market conditions may differ from those determined by the state. A Local Area may request that additional occupations be added to the labor demand list for their area if they demonstrated that there is a significant excess of demand over supply for adequately trained workers in the area. The GRWDB has traditionally sought out new and innovative methods to obtain and utilize data to better workforce development programming and services to the job seeker and employer. The use of AOSOS and Futureworks are two additional data bases that are utilized to keep current and informed in Local Area contract-performance trends.

The GRWDB and the One Stop Career Training Center have adhered to the ETPL processes as outlined in New Jersey's Eligible Training Provider List Procedures and ascribe to Quality Assurance frameworks as a way to see outcomes to determine program success and better evaluate the trainers who are providing the training. The trainers that the Greater Raritan One-Stop Training Center contracts to provide programming for Individual Training Agreements are approved providers as envisioned by state and federal law. Each trainer also signs a master agreement with the GRWDB. Job training is defined as occupational training, remedial instruction or occupational safety and health training. NJ law mandates the collection and display of specific provider and program performance data on the Consumer Credit Card. WIOA provides that participants in need of training services to enhance their job readiness or career pathway may access career training through a list of state-approved training providers and their state-approved training programs, which the Greater Raritan One-Stop Career Training Center adheres to.

The GRWDB established local policy for work-based learning efforts, including On-the-Job Training and Incumbent Worker Training initiatives. These are also discrete line items in the GRWDB annual budget. The GRWDB works with the area's BSRs to outreach about these initiatives, especially because the state also offers OJT opportunities. As noted previously, procedures have been established to help guide businesses through the process. Local contracts are managed by GRWDB staff, while the documentation of individual performance outcomes are supported by Training Center staff.

The GRWDB has certified the One-Stop as outlined by SETC Policy 2016-14 and utilizes the One-Stop Certification Checklist as the model for the monitoring process for the One-Stop monitoring the required elements on a yearly basis. The GRWDB understands the need for compliance/requirements, having the proper structure and protocols to enable the board, its partners, and its services to be successful.

Communicating monitoring results can encourage actions by partners. The sharing of monitoring results will use data visualization techniques to clearly communicate outcomes with visual representations ranging from tables, graphs to more complex interactive media. By making it easier for stakeholders to glean important information for the data, the GRWDB can increase the chances that the results will be discussed and used. The primary purpose of monitoring is to use the results to make programmatic changes that improve workforce development services. The GRWDB offers transparent, wide-ranging outreach via the website, reports, committee work, community memberships, press releases, webinars, event planning and weekly resource report out to the community. The board will continue these and work to develop additional efforts going forward.

The purpose of oversight and monitoring is to determine if service provision by contracted providers are operating a high-quality system in compliance with the NJDOL and the GRWDB's standards and guidelines; all applicable laws and regulations; agreements with federal or state grantor agencies; and appropriate administrative directives. State monitoring also evaluates operational and financial compliance on an annual basis, and the GRWDB has used those reviews to update operational procedures. Monitoring information, reports, and results are integral to procurement, funding decisions and the day-to-day work of local workforce system partners.

xii. **Local WDB Structure and Functions – Performance Measures and Accountability**

Describe how the LWDB will utilize local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected officials pursuant to section 116(c) to track and measure performance of:

The One-Stop Career Delivery System as a whole; The One-Stop Operator; One-Stop Career Services providers; Youth providers; The fiscal agent (where appropriate)

The GRWDB is proud of the fact that, through the work of Greater Raritan Career Training Services and the One-Stop Operator, most established performance measures have been consistently met or exceeded. As noted previously, data from the FutureWork dashboard is regularly reviewed during quarterly board meetings and GRWDB staff track and discuss performance with the Career Training Center. Data points are also regularly the focus of spots in the monthly One-Stop Operator Reports, which are shared in the weekly Resources email to board and committee partners and posted on the [About – Greater Raritan's One-Stop Partners](#) tab of the website. (One-Stop Operator Reports starting with Program Year 2019 are posted in the Greater Raritan One-Stop Operator section of the page.)

The Program Year performance also has been shared in all Annual Reports of the board, and the Annual Reports starting with 2015-2016 and going to 2021-2022 are housed on the [About – Annual Reports](#) tab of the website.

During discussions with board members about the performance metrics, staff has noted that that meeting the performance levels was impacted during Covid, with fewer individuals entering the system for service. While the overall number served has been lower over the past three years, the performance outcomes have been steady. While service-level numbers have slowly increased, they are not back to pre-pandemic levels (see Attachment 4), and this will be a renewed focus of all providers – One-Stop Operator, Career Training Services, Youth services, WorkFirst New Jersey and the WorkForce Learning Link for Program Year 2023.

As noted previously, the GRWDB since 2015 has maintained with its partners a local monthly performance dashboard. Over the past several years, the different types of data sets have grown to better reflect the various services offered in the Local Area, not only by Training Services but by other partners, including BSRs and the GRWDB. The dashboard became particularly important during Covid, as it allowed the GRWDB to reflect the varied work being done by all partners adapting to new ways of providing services. This data, housed in an Excel document and shared regularly with board and committee members, is now, thanks Somerset County GIS team members, available in a PowerBi platform on found on the [About – Performance Metrics tab](#) of the www.thegrwdb.org. Data is presented in three-year groupings built around the service categories that are still captured and maintained in the Excel document if a board member or member of the public would like to take a deeper dive into the raw data.

Data and results from fiscal and programmatic audits done by state partners also is shared with board members and linked in board meeting agendas. All of this is focused on giving stakeholders and the public a transparent picture of the performance of all parts of the local system, to understand what is working and what needs further refinement.

Xiii. Local WDB Structure and Functions – Training and Development

Describe the training priorities for supporting the implementation of regional and local plans aligned with state priorities and plans. Include specific plans and timelines for support: Chief Elected Officials, County Leadership and Staff; Fiscal Agents; LWDB Members; LWDB Staff; One-Stop Operator Staff; One-Stop Career Services Staff; One-Stop Youth Services Staff; Other Stakeholders and Partners

GRWDB staff members and local partners have participated in numerous trainings in the past year presented through the Garden State Education and Training Association. GRWDB staff have participated separately in the governance trainings started in the winter of 2023, focusing on LWDB organization, procurement, and monitoring. System partners also have taken part in the annual GSETA fall conference.

In the past two years, state director and committee meetings led by SETC also have served as an effective way to understand state priorities and plans and determine how to implement them effectively. In the past two years, the state has done a better of communicating ongoing developments to LWDBs and consider local team members feedback, which has led to smoother implementation and more elastic timelines that have given all parties more time to do their work and institute requested changes. Examples of this include the required policies all LWDBs were asked to have in place by early fall of 2022, and the extension process put in place in the winter of 2023 for the current One-Stop Partners MOU, which is now the end of 2023. For the later, this extension gave LWDBs several additional months to update the MOU, in recognition that the staff of boards needed to complete the Local and Regional Plans, and, for some, complete the competitive bidding process for key services in the first of half of 2023.

To have a smoothly running local workforce system, there can be no surprises about direction and outcomes, and dialogue must be open and transparent. This has been particularly important in the past year, as new direction for LWDBs has been provided by the state. Toward that point, the GRWDB team has worked to provide ongoing, constant and consistent career-related information to all stakeholders, through:

- Board and committee meetings (with the year's schedule posted by the end of the previous year), and with each agenda including the mission and vision of each.
- The website's Meeting Packages tab, with detailed agendas that hyperlink to all support documents and detailed meeting minutes.
- The GRWDB Newsletter posted twice annually on the website (spring and fall) and the GRWDB Annual Report, posted on the website each January.
- Webinars and in-person presentations at various locations throughout the two counties.
- Regular presentations to the Commissioner boards of both counties.
- A weekly Resource email that highlights upcoming events; national, state and area-specific career policies; and news items of interest.
- News releases posted several times a month about upcoming programs and career opportunities in the two counties, complemented by multiple weekly postings on LinkedIn and Facebook platforms.
- The website's home page and different tabs, including About, Events and Resources, that are constantly updated with new information and serve as a central information hub.

July 1, 2023, is the deadline the GRWDB has to complete the implementation of a new model, with a competitively procured, full-time One-Stop Operator and a vendor for Career Training Services. These vendors will work with other procured service providers – WorkFirst New Jersey, Youth services and Workforce Learning Link – who will be developing enhanced direct relationships with the GRWDB, as it sets service levels and policies for the Local Area and works with all stakeholders to operationalize the broader mission, vision and goals. This does not mean that on July 1, a switch will be flipped, and everything will be done. Over the next year, this is a process that will require collaboration, flexibility and experimentation by all system partners and stakeholders, so that the vision outlined in this Local Plan can be realized. These muscles have been developed over the past three years, and they will need to continue to be flexed and built up to produce a workforce system that assists the job seekers and employers in Hunterdon and Somerset Counties achieve success.

As noted throughout this plan, the work to move the missions and vision forward is not a light lift. There are many parts to the system, and sometimes a distinct need to educate, and in many instances, re-educate partners about the work and related processes, and to continually educate the community about what we are trying to accomplish. It certainly can be a daunting and sometimes frustrating process. At the same time, we also want to measure the success of what we are trying to do, to see if desired outcomes are developing or if the strategy needs to be adjusted or dropped – the old philosophy of failing fast comes to mind.

Thus far, we have been pleased about the stories the numbers are telling us. Some examples:

- Over the past four years, the GRWDB continues to grow the Summer Youth Employment Program – the 2023 program involved 72 young people and 35 employers, several involved with the workforce board for the first time. This was up 56 young people and 24 employers in 2022. We also had four participants last year and two this year continuing working with the employers. With this success in mind, GRWDB have been developing ways to increase outreach and participation if the GRWDB receives the competitive grant opportunity in 2024.
- As previously noted, the SkillUp platform continues to grow, with more than 4,400 users registered since the program began and 1,278 users registering in 2023. As part of the program's outreach, throughout 2023 has worked with an increasing number of small businesses to market SkillUp as an Incumbent Worker Training program, with five businesses registering 22 workers for specific learning experiences. With these results in mind, the GRWDB has mapped out an aggressive 2024 strategy.
- The work done with outreach for the Summer Youth Employment Program and Incumbent Worker Training in 2023 led to three other businesses establishing incumbent worker training for 10 employers using different training platforms for Incumbent Worker Training. In addition, three employers in 2023 established OJT contracts with the GRWDB for three new employees which resulted in career-pathway successes. As a result, this is another initiative board staff is marketing for 2024.
- The American Rescue Plan-funded Raritan Valley Community College scholarship program started in 2022 was further funded by the Commissioner boards of the two counties in 2023. As of December 1, 2023, 38 individuals in the two counties (31 in Somerset County and seven in Hunterdon County) have received scholarships and \$45,000 is still available.

- Also in September 2023, the GRWDB working with the Literacy Volunteers of Somerset County and two education providers launched a First Steps Basic English program for the most in-need English Language Learners. Also funded by ARP dollars, this program created five new literacy classes beyond the existing Title II classes. These are areas previously not served by Title II or in areas where need dictates additional capacity. As of December 1, 2023, 70 students have gone through the first three months of classes, and the program goes through 2024. It also is funded outreach for additional tutors to provide one-on-one or group classes by the Literacy Volunteers. The goal is to get these students into Title II classes and get them into careers – a goal also reflected in a survey done of students.
- As part of this grant, the GRWDB also included additional dollars for social media marketing, focusing on resources for job seekers. As a result, traffic to the GRWDB has doubled and calls and emails about services increased about a quarter overall. This has reinforced our goal of looking at the GRWDB budget and segregating out dollars for additional outreach efforts.
- Added to this point, some of the messaging in the past two months has focused exclusively on the Resume Portal, and over a 10-week period (late September to December 1, 2023), 105 new users registered to use this portal.
- The Chromebook program with its 45-number fleet has seen increased usage, to the point where additional Chromebooks are needed to support an increased number of customers coming into the program. Looking ahead to an anticipated NJDOL NGO in early January, the GRWDB will be asking for funding for another 45 Chromebooks. As part of this NGO, the GRWDB also will be asking for funding to dedicate a Somerset County transportation van exclusively to the WFNJ population. In One-Stop Operator talks around MOU development, transportation is a top barrier for that population, and the county is willing to dedicate one of its buses to the program and allowing it to travel to customers in both counties.

While there is work to do, the results shared above show what can be accomplished when partners come together to think about their work and processes in new and exciting ways.

XIV. Local WDB Structure and Functions – Regional and Local Plan Development

Describe the process to create regional and local plans, in respective plans, and provide assurances that it was an open and transparent process, including:

- *The operations of One-Stop Career Centers, specifically American Job Center certification, as outlined by SETC Policy #2016-14.*
- *List and describe any meetings of workgroups, taskforces or similar efforts. Documentation of these meetings, including minutes and attendees, must be maintained regionally or locally. Include a list of the participants and their organizations.*
- *Describe the process used by the region and the LWDBs to make available copies of the proposed local plan to the public, through electronic and other means including public hearings and news media.*
- *Describe the process used to provide an opportunity for public comment by all local stakeholders, prior to submission of the plan.*

- *Describe any additional regional and/or local requirements or processes for public comments. Provide a list of stakeholders who were notified of the opportunity for public comments in both regional and local plans. Include as an attachment to the finalized plans all comments.*
- *Plans should be viewed as system-wide/community documents. Ensure that the plans highlight the ways in which community partners at the regional and local levels were involved in the development of plans and resulting documents.*

The GRWDB began talking about the 2023 Local Plan at its October 2023 quarterly board meeting. At that meeting, it was decided to have a Local Plan meeting, open to all community and board members and legally noticed to the public. That hybrid meeting was conducted on December 6, 2023, in Somerville. More than 30 people attended in person and 25 attended virtually. A Local Plan presentation was compiled by staff, with slides on different performance metrics and key areas that the Local Plan could focus on as it was formulated. Material compiled by the LMI Specialist and One-Stop Operator was included. (Attachment 9 link)

This material and other data sets were discussed and further reviewed at several committee meetings, including at the January 26, 2023, GRWDB Board quarterly meeting and at February committee meetings. As part of this outreach effort, three surveys were developed to get related feedback from different constituent stakeholders. The links to these surveys were shared in social media posts and in news releases and highlighted in a story on the home page of the GRWDB website. The surveys were for:

[Individuals looking for work or who are already in the workforce](#)

[Employers looking to hire, with a focus on skills these employers need right now](#)

[Social-service agencies assisting individuals with a variety of issues, including career development](#)

Survey samples are small but the overall trends of the responses are of interest to staff and stakeholders and the results were shared with board members at the March 23 quarterly board meeting. (The survey results were shared with Local Area team members, as another data point that can be used to understand what is happening with job seekers and employers in the local area.) Using feedback from the various meetings and the data sets provided by system partners, GRWDB staff members compiled the draft of the Local Plan. This draft was reviewed and approved by the full board at the March 23 meeting.

Planning for the Regional Plan began in January 2023 and a consultant was chosen to write the plan that month. LWDB directors met in a series of six meetings to discuss the questions in the plan, which was completed on March 30, 2023, and shared with participating LWDB directors on March 31, 2023.

As the plans were developed, careful consideration was given how the two documents can breath together to support the work of local and regional partners. To that point, the discussions have led to shared best practices about OJTs and Incumbent Worker Training, and how contiguous boards need to streamline processes to make it easier for businesses to use our services. On a statewide lens, GSETA also will play a large role in helping to operationalize state initiatives while also sharing local feedback as a single entity. The northern local boards also are discussing shared programming and outreach strategies in

Order to more effectively work with all customers. In particular, the boards want to share strategies to co-enroll customers and braid funding. For example, the GRWDB and the Middlesex County WDB are sharing an OJT program for a business with locations in Somerset and Middlesex counties – the GRWDB is taking the lead and is working, through an agreement, to get reimbursed for monies paid out for Middlesex residents in the GRWDB program. With everything we are talking about, the goal is to make it easier for job seekers and businesses to use workforce development services.

The draft Local Plan and the draft Regional Plan were the subject of a legal notice in the Courier News / MyCentralJersey.com on Wednesday, April 5, 2023. The Plans were the subject of a news release sent out that day, and links to the Plans were included in a story on the home page of the GRWDB website. The story stayed on the home page until May 5, 2023. (In addition, the Plans' links are in the Core Initiatives section of the [About – Mission, Policies and Strategic Priorities](#) tab of the website, next to the links to the previous Plans.) The Local Plan also was the subject of social media posts through the month. All stories and postings included instructions on how to provide feedback on the Plans (email info@thegrwdb.org.) The link to the Local Plan also was included in several weekly Resource emails and in the spring GRWDB Newsletter. Hard copies of the Plans were available in the GRWDB office on the third floor at 27 Warren St. in Somerville, and at the Greater Raritan One-Stop Career Center at 6 Gauntt Place in Flemington.

No public comments were received about either plan. The GRWDB Director spoke about the Local and Regional Plan at the April 25, 2023, agenda session of the Somerset County Board of County Commissioners, during which a resolution for Commissioner approval was introduced. At their May 9, 2023, the Commissioners voted unanimously to approve the plan submission to the SETC.

Both Plans were the subject of multiple communications, to ensure community members and stakeholders knew about and could comment on the content of each Plan.

XV. November 4, 2025, addendum with updates

In section II of the 2023-2026 Local Area Plan on Local and Regional Workforce Strategies, the GRWDB posed several questions around how the local system will work to remain relevant through the report. Following are the questions posed and some of the actions taken since the Local Plan was first adopted to ensure continued growth and relevancy for job seekers and businesses in Hunterdon and Somerset counties.

It should be noted that the GRWDB provides updated relevant data to all partners quarterly and publishes this data on its website and shares it on its mobile platform. Of note, the data continues to have a stable throughline – while there are more minor fluctuations, it has stayed relatively constant. For example, healthcare and software have remained top jobs in the two counties. This brings consistency to the GRWDB's planning procedures.

At the same time, the GRWDB has participated with all NJDOL planning programs which are designed to support planning and programmatic excellence for New Jersey's workforce development boards. The board's programmatic and fiscal audits have been positive and the GRWDB will continue to work to implement all suggested policy updates and fiscal and program procedures while communicating the why behind these changes to all partners and the local community. Throughout the past two years and looking forward, the emphasis has remained on enhancing collaboration, implementing new programs and expanding communication so that all partners move forward collectively and positively.

How does it show the benefits of participating in a system in a time when unemployment is at a record low?

Over the past two years, unemployment rates in the two counties have remained relatively low, particularly in relation to the rest of New Jersey. (Hunterdon County currently has the lowest unemployment rate in the state, and Somerset County has the third lowest.) But when people need the service, they suddenly discover how much is available to them, as is evidenced by the comments given by those who fill out local and state customer service surveys over the past several years.

To address this, the GRWDB has invested in specific social media outreach and ads for its Work First NJ and Summer Youth Work Experience Program over the past two years. In concert with this, the GRWDB Community Engagement specialist has increased tabling at a variety of specific and general community events. The GRWDB continues to grow its annual large job (more than 700 people attended the June 2025 event) while starting a quarterly series of sector-focused job fairs in 2025. The GRWDB has standardized all collateral sent out by partners while working with the One-Stop Operator to increase communication and collaboration between partners so that the value of the services of the local workforce development system is understood by all who in turn share that information with customers.

The ongoing goal of the GRWDB and system partners is to constantly trumpet the services and value of the system. By increasing general awareness, residents and businesses know that they can turn to the system and its many programs and partners whenever the need arises.

How does it implement programs that are easy to use and meaningful to job seekers and to those looking for better careers?

As noted above, the GRWDB, has worked to standardize and simplify collateral so that communications are easy to read, comprehend and activate. This effort extends to the GRWDB website, which every six months has all links checked for accuracy. In addition, the calendar is updated several times a week and the home page is updated at least weekly. Similarly, in early 2025 the GRWDB and the vendor for its mobile platform updated the appearance of the platform while editing and adding new relevant categories. The mobile platform sign-up is promoted on every website page, on all email signatures and at all outside events. These events have resulted in increased website views and a near doubling of mobile platform users, which now tops more than 2,000 calendar entries

During 2024 and 2025, the GRWDB implemented new career programs and services aimed at specific populations.

- The TANF Initiative provides enhanced supportive services – car repair, license restoration, transportation and more – designed to enable to remove some barriers so that program participants can utilize everything available to them so they can get and retain employment. Since launching in July of 2025, the program has served 55 individuals.
- The First Steps Basic English program, funded by Somerset County using ARP dollars, has provided literacy services to English Language to more than 300 individuals in Somerset County over the past two years. About one-third of the participants used the services to improve their career prospects. The program also provided an opportunity for literacy providers to collaborate more efficiently and introduce participants to all system services.
- The Summer Youth Work Experience Program also has expanded the number of participants over the past two years. In 2023 and 2024, ARP funding was used to broaden the number of Somerset County individuals participating, taking the participant number to 82. In 2025, the GRWDB received additional NJDOL funding allowing it to serve 94 youth from the two counties. The program coordinator also increased the number of private businesses taking part, and in doing so, introduced the businesses to other system services which they can consider for use as needed.

In addition, these and other system services were shared with all partners so they understood how they can be used by their clients. This is all reflective of the general mission of making sure all partners know about all services, to increase collaboration and program co-enrollment.

How does it help employers trying to grow understand how the nature of work has changed, and how the employers can use system services to meet their immediate and future staffing needs?

In 2024, the One-Stop Operator launched the **Employment Pipeline Initiative**. This project aims to link employers in Hunterdon and Somerset Counties to the qualified talent pool assisted by partners in the local workforce system. The Employment Pipeline can be utilized by businesses of all sizes and types, and it's free to register and join. The registration link and QR code are in [this flyer](#).

In 2024, the Operator also started to gather quarterly job preference data from the four lead partners working with individuals: state Employment Services, the Training Center vendor, the Work First New Jersey vendor and the state Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. The idea was to present that information quarterly so that the state Business Services team could target local businesses aligning with the job preferences of system job seeker participants.

Toward the end of 2024, it was decided to take the initiative one step further by creating quarterly sector-specific job fairs that aligned with those systems; the goal was to get the businesses in one room with job seekers who were interested in those positions. In 2025, four job fairs were conducted – two in Somerville and two in Flemington, with each event hosting 12 to 14 employers. To further enhance effectiveness, employers had the option of reviewing resumes submitted by the job seekers prior to the event and setting up on-site interviews the day of the event. At each event, approximately one-third to one-half of the employers accepted resumes. As a result, after each event we found individuals getting immediately placed – up to 12 following the June event, for example.

For 2026, the Operator is continuing this approach and working with the partners to further refine the resume process. Feedback from some of the employers said some of the applicants' resumes did not fit the job they were applying for and were overall, not as good as they could be. As a result, team members will be reviewing resumes before they are sent to the employer and will offer feedback as needed. In addition, the Operator has created a new one-page resume flyer that directs job seekers to resume resources and local services. This asset will be put on our GRWDB platforms, further expanding what is offered.

This initiative has enhanced our connection to the state Business Services team as well. Besides working closely to coordinate each event, because of additional employers interested in participating in the September health recruitment event, Business Services created a virtual Conversation about Health Careers event conducted at the end of October. This event drew 92 job seekers and featured three health businesses talking about HHA careers. Besides the value this showed the job seekers, this event also showed the businesses the power of the services offered by the local system.

In addition to all of this, in July of 2024 the GRWDB also released a Request for Applicants (RFA) for On-the-Job-Training, Incumbent Worker Training and Incumbent Worker Cohort Training. Six companies responded and were able to offer training to new and current employees. We are in the process of offering this service again through June 2026 because of the value it offers to our local employers.

All of the above reflects the varied ways the GRWDB, the Operator and state Business Services are working to show how businesses in the two counties can benefit from the system's varied services.

How does it communicate its data to local educators and stakeholders so that different work-based learning opportunities are enhanced and/or introduced, and that vocational trades are valued as a career pathway?

The GRWDB has taken a larger role in participating in the CTE programs offered by schools throughout the two counties. This includes taking part in quarterly local meetings and at least one regional meeting per quarter to provide state labor market information to schools to ensure their offerings align with current business needs.

In addition, the GRWDB worked with its Youth Work Experience vendor to create collateral for employers in Hunterdon and Somerset Counties inviting them to consider hosting a 20-hour, paid work experience for young people, ages 16 to 24, who are involved in the Local Area's YES Visions program. Middle Earth, the vendor for the YES program provides a stipend for the youth during their work experience and supports the placements for the youth and employers. A variety of work experiences are needed for the program participants and the GRWDB is working with the vendor to share this opportunity with all stakeholders.

In addition, the GRWDB hosted an apprenticeship event in late 2024 directed at career opportunities after high school. The event, hosted at Raritan Valley Community College (RVCC), was well received by employers and educators, and well attended by youth. As a result, the GRWDB's Youth Committee will work on an event for the spring of 2026 that will focus on vocational career pathways that provide life-sustaining wages. The event will be targeted for youth and their parents/caregivers in an effort to broaden its audience and success.

RVCC also has received additional support through a two-year-old in-demand scholarship program for classes at RVCC's Workforce Training Center (this is funded by Somerset County using ARP dollars) and through a NJDOL WIOA youth grant to fund youth participants in the college's new aseptic manufacturing program which offers training for jobs that can be immediately filled. The GRWDB's WIOA youth outreach vendors are working to inform all stakeholders about this and other programs so that the area's educator stakeholders understand how they can direct students to these opportunities.

How does it help local system partners, including state Employment Services, state Business Services, state DVR team members, contracted career training and youth service providers and GRWDB staff continue to build on its successes and ensure the system becomes more collaborative, efficient and effective?

Throughout 2024 and 2025, the One-Stop Operator continued to broaden the participants of the local Team Leaders meeting. As part of this effort, he changed the structure of the meeting, making it less of a report-out of achievements and challenges - these aspects are gathered beforehand and included in the meeting agenda, which is posted on the [One-Stop Operator page](#) of the website. Instead, he has endeavored to have speakers from agencies receiving special NJDOL grants present about their services so partners understand how they can direct clients appropriately. He also picks a theme that partners can brainstorm and problem-solve around, all the while focusing on positive ways to enhance collaboration. He also has used the Team Meeting as the avenue to ensure the GRWDB is meeting all of its state responsibilities, including reviewing of the Local MOU between partners. This summer he completed some adjustments which are currently being reviewed by partners.

Out of these ongoing discussions evolved one very effective example of how collaboration can be shared: the [Greater Raritan One-Stop Co-Enrollment Matrix](#). This one-page document, which can be easily updated to reflect a change in services or a new partner, is shared each month with partners who are tasked with ensuring their front-line staff understand and use the document. It also is posted as a downloadable link at the top of the Operator page so it can help explain the many services of the system and be a resource for job seekers exploring what the system has to offer. As the Matrix was shared with other areas, other state partners asked for information how the document was put together so that they could create something similar for their areas – collaboration at its best.

ATTACHMENT 4

GRWDB Program Year 2017 to Program Year 2022 Participants and WIOA goals

Greater Raritan Participants & WIOA Performance Goals	PY17	PY18	PY19	PY20	PY21	PY22 (through Feb. 2023)
Total Reportable - WIOA	2,304	2,198	1,988	1,393	1,340	812
Total Participants - WIOA	439	403	389	164	358	167
Enrolled in Training	212	197	139	72	103	71
Dept. of Labor Local Performance Goals						
Dislocated Q2 Performance	85.40%	85.40%	85.90%	58.70%	59.70%	61.40%
Dislocated Q4 Performance	77%	77.10%	78%	57.80%	57.80%	65%
Dislocated Credential	66%	73.50%	74%	67.10%	68.10%	81%
Dislocated Skill Gain	n/a	n/a	n/a	40.00%	41.00%	63%
Adult Q2 Employment	83.30%	83.30%	84%	55.50%	56.50%	61%
Adult Q4 Employment	71.10%	76%	76.80%	62.60%	63.60%	60.80%
Adult Credential	66.30%	68.70%	69%	59.50%	60.50%	75%
Adult Skill Gain	n/a	n/a	n/a	40.00%	41.00%	61%
Youth Q2 Employment	76.70%	72.70%	73.70%	52.90%	53.90%	71.40%
Youth Q4 Employment	45%	45%	54%	54.10%	55%	68.20%
Youth Credential	82.80%	74%	74.50%	50%	51%	62.70%
Youth Skill Gain	n/a	n/a	n/a	42.70%	42.70%	57%

ATTACHMENT 4

GRWDB Program Year 2023 participants and outcomes

Location: Greater Raritan WDB

LWDB Goal

PY23



Performance Summary cards

	Employment Q2	Median Earnings	Employment Q4	Credential	Measurable Skill Gains
Adult	102.95% Actual: 63.83%, Goal: 62.00%, 30 / 47	127.47% Actual: \$8,285.78, Goal: \$6,500.00, Cohort 30	107.87% Actual: 66.67%, Goal: 61.80%, 22 / 33	106.91% Actual: 81.25%, Goal: 76.00%, 26 / 32	129.94% Actual: 80.95%, Goal: 62.30%, 17 / 21
Dislocated Workers	118.08% Actual: 73.68%, Goal: 62.40%, 42 / 57	124.19% Actual: \$11,053.28, Goal: \$8,900.00, Cohort 42	106.53% Actual: 70.31%, Goal: 66.00%, 45 / 64	109.76% Actual: 90.00%, Goal: 82.00%, 54 / 60	148.58% Actual: 95.24%, Goal: 64.10%, 60 / 63
Youth	112.22% Actual: 81.25%, Goal: 72.40%, 13 / 16	115.55% Actual: \$3,928.58, Goal: \$3,400.00, Cohort 8	113.54% Actual: 78.57%, Goal: 69.20%, 11 / 14	156.99% Actual: 100.00%, Goal: 63.70%, 4 / 4	141.47% Actual: 82.05%, Goal: 58.00%, 32 / 39
Wagner-Peyser	122.94% Actual: 60.12%, Goal: 48.90%, 1025 / 1705	253.51% Actual: \$14,577.11, Goal: \$5,750.00, Cohort 1025	127.71% Actual: 61.81%, Goal: 48.40%, 764 / 1236		
All	60.22% Actual: 1037 / 1722	\$14,400.00 Actual: Cohort 1037	61.96% Actual: 772 / 1246	87.37% Actual: 83 / 95	88.33% Actual: 106 / 120

ATTACHMENT 4

GRWDB Program Year 202 participants and outcome as of November 3, 2025 (final outcomes still being tracked)

Location: Greater Raritan WDB

LWDB Goal

PY24



Performance Summary cards

	Employment Q2	Median Earnings	Employment Q4	Credential	Measurable Skill Gains
Adult	104.17% Actual: 70.83%, Goal: 68.00%, 17 / 24	120.97% Actual: \$9,098.00, Goal: \$7,521.00, Cohort 17	75.76% Actual: 50.00%, Goal: 66.00%, 17 / 34	107.74% Actual: 72.73%, Goal: 67.50%, 24 / 33	140.96% Actual: 94.44%, Goal: 67.00%, 17 / 18
Dislocated Workers	102.85% Actual: 65.82%, Goal: 64.00%, 52 / 79	110.34% Actual: \$12,196.23, Goal: \$11,053.00, Cohort 52	90.29% Actual: 61.67%, Goal: 68.30%, 37 / 60	103.73% Actual: 84.75%, Goal: 81.70%, 50 / 59	128.99% Actual: 96.74%, Goal: 75.00%, 89 / 92
Youth	87.21% Actual: 60.00%, Goal: 68.80%, 24 / 40	125.50% Actual: \$4,141.55, Goal: \$3,300.00, Cohort 22	85.03% Actual: 60.71%, Goal: 71.40%, 17 / 28	142.70% Actual: 89.47%, Goal: 62.70%, 17 / 19	120.05% Actual: 81.63%, Goal: 68.00%, 40 / 49
Wagner-Peyser	99.80% Actual: 53.39%, Goal: 53.50%, 1007 / 1886	187.24% Actual: \$14,605.10, Goal: \$7,800.00, Cohort 1007	94.67% Actual: 56.33%, Goal: 59.50%, 1090 / 1935		
All	53.41% Actual: 1019 / 1908	\$14,517.68 Actual: Cohort 1019	56.34% Actual: 1102 / 1956	81.31% Actual: 87 / 107	92.36% Actual: 145 / 157

ATTACHMENT 5

State Negotiated WIOA Performance Measures for Program Year 2022 and Program Year 2023

Adults	PY 2022 Targets	PY 2023 Targets
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	61.0%	62.0%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	60.8%	61.8%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$6,400	\$6,500
Credential Attainment 4th Quarter After Exit	75.0%	76.0%
Measurable Skills Gain	61.3%	62.3%
Dislocated Workers	PY 2022 Targets	PY 2023 Targets
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	61.4%	62.4%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	65.0%	66.0%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$8,800	\$8,900
Credential Attainment 4th Quarter After Exit	81.0%	82.0%
Measurable Skills Gain	63.1%	64.1%
Youth	PY 2022 Targets	PY 2023 Targets
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	71.4%	72.4%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	68.2%	69.2%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$3,300	\$3,400
Credential Attainment 4th Quarter After Exit	62.7%	63.7%
Measurable Skills Gain	57.0%	58.0%
Wagner-Peyser	PY 2022 Targets	PY 2023 Targets
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	47.9%	48.9%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	47.4%	48.4%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$5,650	\$5,750

ATTACHMENT 5

State Negotiated WIOA Performance Measures for Program Year 2024 and Program Year 2025

Adults	PY 2024 Targets	PY 2025 Targets
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	68.0%	69.0%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	66.0%	67.0%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$7,521	\$7,621
Credential Attainment 4th Quarter After Exit	67.5%	68.5%
Measurable Skills Gain	67.0%	68.0%
Dislocated Workers	PY 2024 Targets	PY 2025 Targets
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	64.0%	64.5%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	68.3%	69.3%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$11,053	\$11,153
Credential Attainment 4th Quarter After Exit	81.7%	82.7%
Measurable Skills Gain	75.0%	76.0%
Youth	PY 2024 Targets	PY 2025 Targets
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	68.8%	69.8%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	71.4%	72.4%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$3,300	\$3,400
Credential Attainment 4th Quarter After Exit	62.7%	63.7%
Measurable Skills Gain	68.0%	68.5%
Wagner-Peyser	PY 2024 Targets	PY 2025 Targets
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	53.5%	54.0%
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	59.5%	60.0%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$7,800	\$7,900