

Unified Local Youth Plan
PY 2024 WIOA Youth Formula Funds
SFY 2025 Minnesota Youth Program (MYP)

Due Friday, April 12, 2024

Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development
Employment and Training Programs
Office of Youth Development


**PY 2024 WIOA Youth Formula Funds
SFY 2025 Minnesota Youth Program (MYP)
Cover Sheet/Signature Page**

APPLICANT AGENCY - Use the legal name and full address of the fiscal agency with whom the grant will be executed.	Contact Name and Address
Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council 607 West Main Street Marshall, MN 56258	Maria Peters, Youth Program Manager 607 West Main Street Marshall, MN 56258
Director Name: Carrie Bendix Telephone Number: 507-476-2188 Fax: 507-537-6362 E-Mail: cbendix@swmnpic.org	Contact Name: Maria Peters Telephone Number: 507-829-8168 Fax: 507-537-6362 E-Mail: mpeters@swmnpic.org

Basic Organization Information

Federal Employer ID Number: 41-1487964	Minnesota Tax Identification Number: 3012698
Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number:	SWIFT Vendor ID Number (if known): 0000204682

I certify that the information contained herein is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and that I submit this application on behalf of the applicant agency.

Signature:	
Title:	Executive Director
Date:	3/7/2024

Checklist of Items to be Included With Your Unified Local Youth Plan Submitted to DEED:

NOTE: After the unified plan is approved by DEED and final allocations have been released by DOL, a WIOA Youth budget form and instructions will be sent to you at that time to update and complete, sign and return so your PY24 WIOA Youth Formula Grant funding can be released as quickly as possible. Since SFY25 MYP allocations are final, we encourage you to submit the SFY25 MYP budget with the Unified Local Youth Plan in April or shortly thereafter to ensure that MYP contracts are in place when the new fiscal year begins July 1, 2024. The budget forms are Excel documents that are attached separately from this planning document.

Signed Cover Page: _____

PY24-25 WIOA Youth Performance (submitted after local goals negotiated): _____

List of Youth Committee Members (if applicable): _____

(If applicable) List of Youth Service Providers For PY24 (WIOA) and SFY25 (MYP): _____

Current Youth Committee Mission Statement and Workplan (if applicable): _____

Copy of the Most Recent Request For Proposal (RFP) Used to Select Service Providers and/or Services **OR** a Copy of LWDB Minutes Affirming LWDA Staff are the Sole Providers of WIOA Youth Services for the WDA: _____

Best Practices for Serving the Neediest Youth: _____

Copy of Current Local Supportive Services Policy for Youth Participants: _____

Copy of Current Local Youth Incentive Policy: _____

Copy of Current ITA Policy for Youth, Plus Related Forms: _____

Copy of Current Local Stipend Policy: _____

Completed "WIOA Youth Program Elements" Chart: _____

Completed "Shared Vision for Youth" Chart: _____

Completed Narrative: _____

(If applicable) Attachment 1H Workplan: Youth Program Service Delivery Design Addendum to Enhance Services to In-School Youth (ISY) Who Are Homeless or in Foster Care _____

PY22 and PY23 WIOA Youth Approved/Negotiated Levels of Performance - MN

(as of 7/22/22)

State	Program Year 2022 (7/1/22 - 6/30/23)					Program Year 2023 (7/1/23 - 6/30/24)				
	Q2 EET	Q4 EET	Yth Cred	Median Earnings	MSG	Q2 EET	Q4 EET	Yth Cred	Median Earnings	MSG
State	68.0%	69.0%	62.0%	\$ 4,000	41.0%	69.0%	69.0%	62.0%	\$ 4,000	42.0%
WDA 1	69.0%	69.0%	62.0%	\$ 4,000	42.0%	69.0%	69.0%	62.0%	\$ 4,000	42.0%
WDA 2	68.0%	70.0%	62.0%	\$ 4,000	49.0%	69.0%	70.0%	62.0%	\$ 4,250	50.0%
WDA 3	69.5%	69.0%	62.5%	\$ 3,800	49.0%	70.0%	69.5%	62.5%	\$ 3,850	49.5%
WDA 4	68.0%	69.0%	54.0%	\$ 3,100	41.0%	69.0%	69.0%	55.0%	\$ 3,400	42.0%
WDA 5	68.0%	69.0%	62.0%	\$ 4,000	41.0%	69.0%	69.0%	62.0%	\$ 4,000	42.0%
WDA 6	68.0%	69.0%	62.0%	\$ 3,400	41.0%	69.0%	69.0%	62.0%	\$ 3,400	42.0%
WDA 7	68.0%	69.0%	62.0%	\$ 4,000	41.0%	69.0%	69.0%	62.0%	\$ 4,000	42.0%
WDA 8	68.0%	69.0%	55.0%	\$ 4,000	46.0%	69.0%	69.0%	55.0%	\$ 4,000	46.0%
WDA 9	68.0%	69.0%	54.0%	\$ 3,500	41.0%	68.0%	69.0%	55.0%	\$ 3,500	42.0%
WDA 10	68.0%	69.0%	62.0%	\$ 4,000	41.0%	69.0%	69.0%	62.0%	\$ 4,000	42.0%
WDA 12	68.0%	69.0%	62.0%	\$ 4,000	41.0%	69.0%	69.0%	62.0%	\$ 4,000	42.0%
WDA 14	68.0%	69.0%	62.0%	\$ 4,000	41.0%	69.0%	69.0%	62.0%	\$ 4,000	42.0%
WDA 15	68.0%	69.0%	62.0%	\$ 4,000	41.0%	68.0%	69.0%	62.0%	\$ 4,000	42.0%
WDA 16	69.0%	69.0%	62.0%	\$ 4,000	50.0%	69.0%	69.0%	62.0%	\$ 4,000	50.0%
WDA 17	76.0%	74.0%	62.0%	\$ 4,000	41.0%	76.0%	74.0%	62.0%	\$ 4,000	42.0%
WDA 18	49.0%	74.0%	62.5%	\$ 4,000	41.0%	69.0%	49.0%	62.5%	\$ 4,000	42.0%

- denotes target value +/- state-negotiated levels of performance

PY 2024-2025 WIOA Youth Performance

(Definitions of Each Measure are on the Following Page)

WDA/Contact:	
E-Mail Address/Phone Number:	
Date Submitted (or Modified):	

WIOA Youth Performance Measure	PY 2024 (STATE PLANNED)	PY 2025 (STATE PLANNED)	PY 2024 (WDA PLANNED)	PY 2025 (WDA PLANNED)
Employment/Training 2nd Quarter After Exit:	TBD	TBD		
Employment/Training 4th Quarter After Exit:	TBD	TBD		
Credential Attainment:	TBD	TBD		
Median Earnings:	TBD	TBD		
Measurable Skills Gain:	TBD	TBD		

Youth team will negotiate WDA-level performance goals AFTER DEED negotiates state-level performance goals with DOL in May/June 2024. No action is needed by WDAs on this form until after performance goals are negotiated.

WIOA Youth Performance Definitions

Employment/Training 2nd Quarter After Exit: The percentage of Title I Youth program participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the second quarter after exit from the program.

Employment/Training 4th Quarter After Exit: The percentage of Title I Youth program participants who are in education or training activities, or in unsubsidized employment, during the fourth quarter after exit from the program.

Credential Attainment: The percentage of those participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding those in on-the-job training (OJT) and customized training) who attain a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year after exit from the program. A participant who has attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent is included in the percentage of participants who have attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent only if the participant also is employed or is enrolled in an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within one year after exit from the program.

Measurable Skills Gain: The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains, defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress, towards such a credential or employment. Depending on the type of education or training program, documented progress is defined as one of the following:

1. Documented achievement of at least one educational functioning level of a participant who is receiving instruction below the postsecondary education level;
2. Documented attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;
3. Secondary or postsecondary transcript or report card for a sufficient number of credit hours that shows a participant is meeting the State unit's academic standards;
4. Satisfactory or better progress report, towards established milestones, such as completion of OJT or completion of one year of an apprenticeship program or similar milestones, from an employer or training provider who is providing training; OR,
5. Successful passage of an exam that is required for a particular occupation or progress in attaining technical or occupational skills as evidenced by trade-related benchmarks such as knowledge-based exams.

Median Earnings: The median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.

Youth Committee Information For PY 2024/SFY 2025

Provide a current Mission Statement and Work Plan for your Youth Committee

Include a Current Youth Committee Membership List (see below for sample format). Add additional rows as needed. Indicate “Yes” or “No” in the right-hand column if the Youth Committee member is a voting member of the LWIB.

YOUTH COMMITTEE MEMBER NAME	ORGANIZATION/REPRESENTING (examples: business, education, community-based organizations, youth, parent, etc.)	Full LWDB Member?
Chair: <i>Bruce Bergeson</i> Phone Number: 320-226-5692 E-Mail: <i>bbergeson@montevideoschools.org</i>	Education: Director -Minnesota River Valley Career and Technical Education Collaborative	Yes
Member Name: <i>Anne Johnson</i> Phone Number: 507-637-2828 E-Mail: <i>anne@redwoodfalls.org</i>	Business: Executive Director, Redwood Area Chamber & Tourism	Yes
Member Name: <i>Linda Pesch</i> Phone Number: 507-223-1325 E-Mail: <i>Linda.pesch@mnwest.edu</i>	Education: Director of Enrollment, Minnesota West Community and Technical College	No
Member Name: <i>Jen Thovson</i> Phone Number: 507-223-1313 E-Mail: <i>Jennifer.thovson@mnwest.edu</i>	Education/Perkins Consortium: Student Services, Minnesota West Community and Technical College	No
Member Name: <i>Gail Polejewski</i> Phone Number: 507-537-2271 E-Mail: <i>gail.polejewski@swsc.org</i>	Education/Perkins Consortium: Southwest West Central Service Coop & Minnesota West Community and Technical College	No
Member Name: <i>Eriann Faris</i> Phone Number: 507-530-3573 E-Mail: <i>Eriann.Faris@swsc.org</i>	Education: Southwest West Central Service Coop	No
Member Name: <i>Robin Weise</i> Phone Number: 507-836-8547, ext 1638 E-Mail: <i>Robin@swrdc.org</i>	Economic Development: Southwest Regional Development Commission	No
Member Name: <i>Jesse Kodet</i> Phone Number: (507)697-6185 ext. 2600 E-Mail: <i>Jesse.Kodet@lowersioux.com</i>	Lower Sioux Indian Community	No
Member Name: <i>Cami Raymond</i> Phone Number: 507-476-4049 E-Mail: Camille.Raymond@state.mn.us	DEED: Vocational Rehabilitation Services	No
Member Name: <i>Craig Wilson</i> Phone Number: 507-532-1277 E-Mail: <i>Craig.Wilson@swhhs.com</i>	Southwest Health and Human Services	No
Member Name: <i>Marly Wagner</i> Phone Number: 507-537-7266 E-Mail: <i>Marly.Wagner@smsu.edu</i>	Education: TRIO Upward Bound	No

Member Name: <i>Melissa Scholten</i> Phone Number: 507-537-6017 E-Mail: <i>Melissa.Scholten@smsu.edu</i>	Education: Southwest Minnesota State University- Career Services Director	No
Member Name: <i>Kati Birhanzi</i> Phone Number: 320-269-6446 ext. 1169 E-Mail: kbirhanzi@montevideoschools.org	Education: Montevideo School District	No

Youth Service Provider Information For PY 2024/SFY 2025

Provide an updated list of all current youth service providers (see below for sample format). The information provided in this chart will be posted on the DEED website. Please be sure that the contact person's name, phone number and e-mail address are entered correctly for each service provider. Add additional rows for additional providers as needed.

Youth Service Provider/Contact	WIOA	MYP																					
Name of Service Provider: <i>Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council, Inc.</i> Address: <i>607 West Main Street</i> City, State, ZIP <i>Marshall, MN 56258</i> Contact Person: <i>Maria Peters</i> Contact Person Phone: <i>507-829-8168</i> Contact Person E-Mail: <i>mpeters@swmnpic.org</i> Service Provider Website: <i>www.swmnpic.org</i>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Yes</th> <th>No</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>ISY:</td> <td>X</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>OSY:</td> <td>X</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Yes	No	ISY:	X		OSY:	X		<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Yes</th> <th>No</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Summer ONLY:</td> <td></td> <td>X</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Year-Round (incl. summer):</td> <td>X</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Outreach to Schools:</td> <td>X</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Yes	No	Summer ONLY:		X	Year-Round (incl. summer):	X		Outreach to Schools:	X	
	Yes	No																					
ISY:	X																						
OSY:	X																						
	Yes	No																					
Summer ONLY:		X																					
Year-Round (incl. summer):	X																						
Outreach to Schools:	X																						

Attachment 1

Workplan: Youth Program Service Delivery Design (Includes WIOA Young Adult and MYP)

IMPORTANT NOTE: The narrative section covers PY 2024 WIOA Young Adult and SFY 2025 for MYP. Please provide an answer after each question. This information becomes a part of both grant agreements with DEED.

1. Attach a copy of the most recent Request for Proposal(s) (RFP) issued by the WDA for WIOA Young Adult and the Minnesota Youth Program, as appropriate. If the LWDB has determined there is an insufficient number of eligible youth service providers based on Section 123(b) of WIOA law, please include a copy of appropriate board minutes and/or resolution stating as such.
2. Describe outreach and recruitment of:
 - Out-of-School Youth (“OSY”)
OSY will be recruited through established partnerships with educational institutions, Adult Basic Education (ABE), Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS), community action councils, county agencies, businesses, human service agencies, community corrections, parents, past or current participants, and other youth-serving organizations. The Youth Committee, Local WDB Members, CEOB Members, staff, and partners are involved in the outreach, recruitment, and referral process. Additional outreach and recruitment initiatives include:
 - Regular meetings with leaders from the Lower Sioux Reservation, Micronesian, Karen, and Somali communities provide great opportunities to customize culturally responsive outreach efforts as well as services.
 - Working closely with Upward Bound and TRIO programming to identify referrals attending training programs for potential tuition assistance.
 - Work closely with Vocational Rehabilitation Services to identify referrals, especially those youth placed on a VRS wait-list.
 - Contacting former Minnesota Youth Participants (MYP) participants to determine whether they could qualify for and benefit from additional services under WIOA.
 - Referrals from local Adult Basic Education (ABE) instructors to find GED, Adult Diploma, and English as Second Language (ESL) students who qualify for services under WIOA and MYP.
 - Meet regularly with Job Corp representative.
 - Media releases to newspapers throughout WDA 6, which inform their readers of the PIC ability to provide scholarship opportunities, paid internships/work opportunities, and On-the- Job Training (OJT).

- Work with county social services and public health agencies, as well as other agencies serving at-risk youth and their families (e.g. local resource centers for homeless youth, local food shelves, mental health services providers, etc.) to identify out-of-school youth who could benefit from services under WIOA/WIOA and MYP, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
 - Utilize PICs social media (Southwest Minnesota Careers Facebook page, and PICs You Tube, etc.) to inform the public of the services available, specifically the scholarship opportunities and career pathway opportunities for OSY.
 - Attend local community events, including college and business expos, career fairs, hiring events, and other community outreach events delivering information of services available for WIOA and MYP.
 - Identify students participating in Outreach to Schools (OTS) for WIOA OSY and MYP services.
 - Ongoing communication with public assistance employment counselors to determine if they have clients who would qualify for and benefit from services under WIOA and MYP, for example those receiving Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP).
 - Connect with area secondary school teachers, special education case managers, principals, and counselors to inquire about recent graduates in their communities who are known to be struggling to find a career path.
 - Encourage current and past participants to inform their friends and family about the services offered by PIC and CareerForce partners. Ask employers to refer their potential candidates for PIC Youth and Young Adult Program services.
- Other avenues used are:
- Word of Mouth
 - PIC Website (www.swmnpic.org) & CareerForceMN
 - DEEDs Local Job Service and Workforce Strategy Consultants- Employer referrals/engagement
 - Career Pathway Training- Youth/Adult Career Pathway Partnerships
 - Southwest Minnesota Standing Youth Committee
 - Rural Career Counseling Coordinator (RC3) Initiatives
- In-School Youth (“ISY”)

The ISY Program provided by PIC is designed to provide career awareness, career exploration, work experience opportunities, job seeking and keeping skills, career-exploration activities such as career assessments, skills assessments, interest assessments, labor market information, etc., to ensure a successful pathway from high-school to post-secondary/workforce. Personalized services may include driver's license obtainment, certificate obtainment (i.e. - Certified Nursing Assistant), or any other support service necessary for the young person to achieve their post high school plans.

The SW MN Workforce Development Board (WDB) has identified Career Pathways as a proven model for job growth and retention in the region, especially for the region’s high growth, in-demand industries. According to Department of Employment & Economic Development’s (DEED) Occupations in Demand (OID) Tool, Manufacturing, Healthcare, Transportation, Construction, and other related industries are just a few of the 200 occupations showing high demand in the region,

with training and education requirements ranging from short-term on-the-job training to post-secondary education to advanced degrees. The PIC, through the Career Pathway Partnership has incorporated the career pathway model into the secondary schools allowing ISY to participate in increased credentialing opportunities.

PIC youth and young adult staff will utilize the following several strategies for the outreach and recruitment of youth in the 14-county service area:

- Connect with local school districts serving students in WDA 6, including charter schools and alternative learning programs/centers to inform school staff about the services offered through of the WIOA youth and MYP programs. Expanded efforts will be made to connect with school counselors, school social workers, and special education case managers to ensure that program information is available to student most at-risk.
- Display WIOA and MYP information in CareerForce locations, local libraries, school career centers, and city and county offices, throughout WDA 6.
- Encourage current and past participants to inform their friends and families about the services offered by PIC and the CareerForce. Encourage partner employers to refer potential candidates for PIC Youth and Young Adult Program services.
- Connect with public assistance employment specialists, to encourage referrals of clients who have family members who may qualify for and benefit from services under WIOA and MYP.
- Attend local community events, including college and business expos, career fairs, hiring events, and other community outreach events delivering information of services available for WIOA and MYP.
- Identify students participating in Outreach to Schools (OTS) for WIOA ISY and MYP services.
- Utilize PICs social media. (Southwest Minnesota Careers Facebook page, and PICs You Tube, etc.)
- As part of the outreach efforts, the PIC youth and young adult programs provides ongoing opportunities for youth to visit our local CareerForce to learn more about the services provided by our local CareerForce and increase awareness and knowledge of resources available to them and their families.
- PIC is a Limited Use Vendor of Vocational Rehabilitation Services Pre-Employment Transitional Services serving youth with disabilities that are ages 14-21 that are attending secondary school and are VR eligible. Youth are placed in work experiences in integrated environments in the community to gain confidence, develop job specific skills, and positive work habits while preparing for future career opportunities.

3. Describe eligibility determination process, including the WDA's strategy for use of the "5% window" for all ISY and affected OSY participants whose income exceeds limits (reminder: up to 5% of ISY and OSY participants (who require income eligibility) served by WIOA Young Adult program may be individuals who do not meet the income eligibility requirements, provided they fall within one or more of the categories described in WIOA Sec. 129 (C). See Chapter 2 of the WIOA Youth Administrative Policy.

An applicant's eligibility is determined based on criteria established by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act rules and regulations and the Minnesota Youth Program outlined in the Youth Administrative Manual provided by the Department of Employment and Economic Development.

Applications are reviewed for eligibility criteria by the Youth Program Staff. Intake interviews are performed and needs identified by means of the Initial Assessment and Individual Service Strategies Form. Youth staff provide all applicants with detailed information on materials required to process their application. Information to confirm eligibility must be documented as outlined in the Youth Administrative Manual provided by the Department of Employment and Economic Development.

The Five (5%) percent window in WDA 6 will be utilized only for special considerations on a case-by-case basis for an ISY and OSY who exhibits one or more of the following challenges and may not be income eligible if they meet one or more of the following at-risk criteria:

- (I) Basic skills deficient.
- (II) An English language learner.
- (III) An offender.
- (IV) A homeless individual, runaway, in foster care (or has aged out of the foster care system), or in an out-of-home placement.
- (V) Pregnant or parenting.
- (VI) A youth who is an individual with a disability.
- (VII) An individual who requires additional assistance to complete an educational program or to secure or hold employment.

Requests for use of the 5% window must be staffed with the Youth Program Manager, and approved by the Executive Director.

4. Identify the WDA's definition of "An individual who requires additional assistance to complete an education program or to secure and hold employment." The definition must be reasonable, quantifiable, and based on evidence that the specific characteristic of the participant identified objectively requires additional assistance. See Chapter 2 of the WIOA Youth Administrative Policy.

While much of the youth and young adults served by PIC meet at least one other at-risk category, the PIC has defined the sixth criteria as "an ISY 14-21 or OSY 16-24 who does not have a realistic career plan, experiencing difficulty completing a career plan for personal, financial, or geographic access reasons, encountering academic or personal difficulties in school/training or has a poor or insufficient work history." These items will be measured by the Initial Assessment completed during intake.

5. Per WIOA Law, Section 3(5) and WIOA Final Rules at 20 CFR 681.290, the U.S. Department of Labor defines an individual as "basic skills deficient" if he or she—

- a. has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th grade level on a generally accepted standardized test; or
- b. is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.

All Minnesota WDAs are required to include the definition of “basic skills deficient” in their local youth plans. Please provide any additional local policy that defines “basic skills deficient” differently from existing federal policy, or indicate if your local policy will mirror existing federal policy as shown above.

The Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council’s definition of “basic skills deficient” mirrors the existing federal policy as shown above.

6. Describe the objective assessment process used to identify appropriate services and potential career pathways for young adults. Identify the assessment tools used by the WDA for all in-school and out-of-school participants.

The objective assessment is the beginning of the set of comprehensive services designed to help youth achieve their potential and become productive and self-sufficient contributors to their communities. Objective assessment is both comprehensive and ongoing. Assessments are provided through individual interviews, paid internships/work experience opportunities, leadership activities, computerized and paper assessments, written assignments, and more. Appropriate accommodations are made for youth with special needs.

The PIC Youth Programs Initial Assessment and Individual Service Strategy form is used to assess the needs of the youth and allows for discussion of the goals the youth is seeking to achieve. The Individual Service Strategy section prompts youth employment specialists to identify the steps necessary to achieve those goals and which of the 14 WIOA program elements are necessary for the young person to achieve their goals. This includes the creation of career pathways for youth and young adults involved in PIC programs as well as effective connections with employers, including small businesses, and in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

Other assessment tools used for various activities may include the World of Work Inventory (WOWI), the Career Scope, Minnesota Career Information System (MCIS) or YouScience. We have also implemented the “Bring Your “A” Game” Essential Skills curriculum in groups and one-on-one.

In addition to the assessments administered to participants directly, PIC youth employment specialists receive copies of school records for in-school youth, including their Individual Education Plans (IEP), 504 plans, transcripts, standardized test results, etc., as appropriate. Participants are encouraged to take the ACT and/or Accuplacer assessments and are asked to produce a copy of their results so that the employment specialist can determine their level of readiness for post-secondary instructions.

7. Describe process for developing the Individual Service Strategy (ISS) and use of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP), including provision of wraparound support services. If your WDA/service provider(s) incorporate “Guideposts For Success” with some (or all) of your participants, please discuss when and how it is used.

Utilizing information from the above listed assessments, PIC youth employment specialists will work with each youth to develop an Individual Service Strategy (ISS). The ISS outlines:

- Individual’s education and/or employment goals;
- Current education level and math/reading grade level equivalence;
- Objectives and timelines to meet stated goals;
- Barriers to achieving goals;
- Support services needed to overcome barriers to goal success;
- Progress updates, follow-up information, referrals, and plan updates
- Job search and placement plan after education/training is completed and youth is ready to become employed.
- Incorporates career pathways as part of both the objective assessment and development of the individual service strategy.
- Directly links to one or more of the performance indicators.
- Includes effective connections to employers, including small employers, in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

Using the above information, the PIC youth employment specialist work with participants to determine an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) that best addresses their short- and long-term goals. Incentive plans may be developed by the PIC youth employment specialist and the participant in conjunction with the ISS to acknowledge achievement of goals and objectives.

When youth have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), a copy is requested, and staff review with the youth. Because the IEP is tailored to the individual’s needs, it is helpful to the staff and others to understand the youth’s disability and how they can help them learn and be most successful. The IEP is useful as goals and objectives are established to ensure they correspond to the needs of the youth and his/her abilities.

Support services may include transportation, uniforms, and other employment and training related items necessary to lessen the barriers and increase chances of success. Referrals for other basic needs items are made as appropriate.

The original copy of the ISS is maintained in the client file. The PIC youth employment specialist reviews the goals and action steps of the ISS with participants on a regular basis to encourage and support youth in achieving their goals. The ISS is updated at least annually.

8. Describe your strategy for providing integrated experiential learning, work-based learning, and work experience for participants. Discuss to what extent your WDA is adapting these activities due to changes resulting from the pandemic.

The PIC Youth Program defines experiential learning as an opportunity for youth to “learn by doing” and then reflect on that experience. This can be accomplished through experiences in a classroom setting (i.e., small group discussion, role play, exercises, and simulations) or hands-on learning through structured activities. All young people are in need of developing critical career skills before they are ready to succeed in unsubsidized employment. They may also lack the experience necessary to secure employment. PIC youth employment specialists address these barriers by continuing to provide experiential and work-based learning opportunities via paid internships/work experience opportunities. Youth are provided the opportunity to gain the skills and experience necessary to find success in the workplace as well as work-based learning (WBL) opportunities through placement in entry level paid work experiences which provide them with an opportunity to learn basic skills and competencies for success in employment.

Work based learning (WBL):

- Provides an opportunity for youth to learn about and meet employer expectations while gaining transferable skills.
- Allows youth to try out different jobs to help determine what they like and dislike.
- Helps build work-readiness skills to prepare them for a future career.
- Provide youth exposure to work/careers that will improve their employment prospects.

A variety of work experience opportunities are available to PIC youth program participants. Youth who excel in entry level work experience are provided with opportunities to participate in an advanced placement with increased responsibility, with the potential of being hired by the employer upon completion of placement. PIC youth programs are proactively working to establish an even greater number of work experience opportunities in the private sector, including those industries in our region which are high demand, high growth. To provide a variety of work experiences, a broad range of employment settings are utilized, not just those in high-demand occupations.

PIC has a strong network of businesses and organizations willing to host paid youth interns (work experience participants) at their sites. Supervisors and participants receive an orientation, from the PIC youth employment specialist. The orientation outlines the responsibilities and expectations of the youth intern, the worksite supervisor, and the employment specialist. Orientation also includes workplace safety, child labor restrictions (as appropriate), the Minnesota Right to Know Act, injury reporting, state and federal employment rules, confidentiality, and equal opportunity employment. Supervisors also have an opportunity to participate in diversity training that is held in the spring each year. A worksite evaluation measuring performance in the workplace is required to assess work readiness for the work readiness indicator. The most effective method of assessing work readiness is to have the worksite supervisor observe and evaluate performance on the worksite. The worksite supervisor is in the best position to

assess the quality of a young person's work performance. The worksite supervisor evaluates/rates the youth on the following categories of:

- Attendance/Punctuality (Dependability)
- Positive Attitude/Behaviors
- Interpersonal Skills (Communication, Relations)
- Decision Making/Stability
- Communication Skills – Written & Verbal
- Appearance

The rating tool is on the students' timecards and is evaluated bi-weekly in accordance with the pay periods. The supervisors complete the evaluation using a Likert scale of one through four, 'one' signifying unacceptable to 'four' identifying exceeding requirements. The evaluation is included on the timecard to promote a conversation about positive developments and needed improvements. Short-term goals for skills improvement are set and monitored by the youth employment specialist when workplace deficiencies or areas for improvement are identified. The employment specialist regularly visits the worksite to observe the participant, discuss progress and areas for skills enhancement, and provide encouragement and support. The youth employment specialists work with the worksite supervisors to address any issues that arise with the youth worker. Additionally, PIC can provide youth experiential learning opportunities or WBL through a structured job shadowing approach. Youth gain insight through real and relevant learning as they identify career paths, connect with local employers, and learn about labor market information. This project has been a successful local initiative with proven outcomes, developed through a solid partnership between workforce development systems and industry partners in Southwest Minnesota.

Job shadowing is a great opportunity for our future workforce to gain valuable insight through real and relevant learning as they begin to determine the paths, they will take post high school. The goal is for students to come away with a better understanding of their field of interest and the skills needed to be successful. Students are provided a range of career development opportunities through partnerships with employers, education, and workforce development agencies. Career Exploration, Career Exposure, and Career Experience support the development of both industry-specific technical skills and professional skills, such as communications, teamwork, and problem solving, valued by nearly all employers. The paradigms used in southwest Minnesota encompasses a wide array of learning experiences, such as job shadowing and workplace tours to internships and on-the-job training; provides meaningful job tasks in a work environment that develops a student for the knowledge and skills that support entry level or advancement in a particular career; expands professional networks; and supports further training, persistence and completion through comprehensive supports such as advising or coaching that prepare students with the information they need to make informed choices about their careers.

The Employer Partnerships we have in southwest Minnesota are very influential in providing solid work-based learning experiences. PIC facilitates these WBL opportunities

alongside our employer partners working towards the end goal of providing comprehensive skill development to student learners including activities designed to promote awareness of careers, workplace norms and employer expectations. These activities incorporate the technical skills components which are industry specific. In the workplace, Career Exploration includes Informational Interviews, Job Shadowing and Workplace Tours. Career Exposure and Experience activities give an in-depth discovery of a particular career and the development of the skills and understanding of the education needed in a particular industry or occupation and activities include work-based skills training, internships, paid work experience and apprenticeships. The student is held to the same expectations as all employees and is evaluated by the workplace supervisor. Traditional classroom-based education and job training programs do not always reflect workplace needs, and employers find that many job candidates lack valuable employability skills.

In the past, PIC was awarded a Youth Skills Training grant and is currently partnering with a school district with a current Youth Skills Training grant to evolve regional work based learning efforts and helping employers develop meaningful work-based learning experience for students and preparing students for “real-life” workplaces and gaining essential workplace skills. We were successful in having 6 worksites approved as Youth Skills Training sites in which student learners ages 16-17 can work in environments in which typically they would need to be 18. PIC continue to work on these efforts to support employers in providing Career Experiences to 16-17 year old student learners in those industries that require a young person to be 18. PIC youth staff are instrumental in helping employers develop meaningful work-based learning experience for students and preparing students for “real-life” workplaces and gaining essential workplace skills. Employers can share their great jobs and promote their businesses to future workers as well as are involved in the curriculum development. Engaging employers on the design of an initiative has helped ensure CTE and Career Pathway related instruction aligns with business needs. As a school-to-career intermediary organization, the PIC serves as a single point of contact for employers to work with the region’s schools and colleges.

The PIC Youth Programs have returned to operating similar to how we did prior to COVID. We realize the populations we are serving do not do well working through content virtually. We continue to adapt as needed to provide experiential learning, work-based learning activities, and work experience opportunities. This included adding more safety precautions, utilizing more zoom meetings, and providing greater flexibility when needed.

9. Describe your strategy for introducing Career Pathways for young adults and process for providing current labor market information on high-growth, in-demand occupations in the region.

The intent of the Career Pathways program is to create a pathway in high growth, in-demand occupations for the young adults in the identified target populations, to enhance basic academic abilities, complete the career pathway, participate in job training, and earn industry recognized credentials and post-secondary education credits.

The initial step is to create opportunities that might not otherwise be affordable or accessible to some of the region's residents. A benefit to out of school youth is accessible training that will allow them to become more employable while they learn additional academic skills. The Bridge programming provides preparatory skills needed to enter the integrated training. The skills offered in the bridge portion include but are not limited to basic employment skills, job search skills, and an introduction to the industry in that the participant is pursuing.

The fundamental career and technical skills training concentrates on high demand/high pay industry in southwest Minnesota. According to DEEDs Occupations In Demand (OID) Tool, Manufacturing, Healthcare, Transportation, Information Technology, and Construction industries are identified as "well above average" demand and growth in southwest Minnesota. The expressed need throughout each industry is the increasing demand for skills with the ability to advance along the employer or industry career pathway for rewarding successful career opportunities.

To assure increased participant completion and skills mastery, career pathway training, work experience, post-secondary credit, and support services will be provided through the project partnership. Additional instruction will enhance participants' Basic English and Math comprehension, computer/technology literacy, work readiness, soft skills, and employability skills.

The intended outcomes are higher skill attainment and successful completion of industry recognized credentials, college credits, job placement, job retention, enrollment in higher education career pathway/degree programs, enhanced awareness of resources and opportunities for career advancement. All the information is packaged into a portfolio for the participants' future access and reference.

Ongoing support is a vital component for participants. Many young people are entering the workforce for the first time, some have had unsuccessful attempts at jobs, others may be reaching beyond what they have ever considered possible for themselves. For this reason, PIC youth employment specialists are available on an ongoing basis to provide a connection, encouragement, and/or to serve as a general resource.

As participants progress along their career path, PIC youth employment specialists provide a post-secondary orientation session, to help youth identify post-training career options. Staff assist in navigating the postsecondary system and provide career counseling to enhance the participants' opportunity for successful transition into the post-secondary environment. College is defined as any post-high school training opportunity resulting in an earned credential, from a certificate to a bachelor's degree and beyond.

Ultimately, the goal of the program is to create career pathways for participants while creating systems change in strengthening partnerships to better support individuals to increase employability and provide employers with skilled workers.

10. If applicable, attach a copy of the WDA’s policy for developing Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) and indicate the date approved by the LWDB/Youth Committee. Indicate if your WDA will be using Minnesota’s waiver to allow use of ITAs for In-School Youth, ages 16-21.

The Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council uses the ITA for out of school youth only.

11. Describe follow-up strategies (including provision of supportive services) for the WIOA Young Adult program and discuss any policy relating to extending beyond the statutory requirement of offering follow-up for at least 12 months after exit.

During participation in PIC youth programs, relationships are established between the participant and youth employment specialist. As the participant begins to demonstrate significant progress toward their achievement of self-sufficiency, as demonstrated by goal completion, credential attainment, employment, etc., discussions occur to prepare the participant for the transition into follow up services. The client is informed that the PIC youth employment specialists will provide services for a minimum of twelve months after the date of program "exit". They are also informed that it will be necessary to maintain interaction and communicate with their employment specialist, and vice versa, for the duration of the follow up period. This will allow for PIC youth employment specialists to offer additional assistance if the participant encounters a need for assistance during the follow-up period. This also gives the employment specialist the opportunity to provide continued coaching so that the participant can continue to maintain and advance their employment as well as their education and living skills. Follow-up contact information from a family or friend who does not live with them but always knows where they will be is collected at the time of intake. The PIC youth employment specialists also obtain the most up to date contact information at time of exit. PIC youth employment specialist makes every effort to ensure an ‘exit interview’ is completed prior to exit. This provides the opportunity to gather most up to date information and remind the participant of the 12-month follow-up services. Correspondence via letters, emails, and phone calls contacting the participants directly are used most often and have proven successful in obtaining necessary information to identify whether there is a need for additional services, or follow-up services.

WDA 6 has no policy relating to extending beyond the statutory requirement of offering follow-up for at least 12 months after exit.

12. Describe the Youth Incentive Policy and attach a copy of the most recent version approved by your LWIB/Youth Committee. Refer to 2 CFR 200.438 and [Chapter 18](#) “WIOA Youth Cost Matrix” for additional background.

Incentives are not currently being used. The PIC Youth Programs has no incentive policy.

13. Discuss your policy and practices relating to providing supportive services to participants. (Attach a copy of your WDA’s Supportive Service Policy for Youth)

Supportive services including transportation, work clothes, tools and more are available to program participants. Please see attached policy for more details.

14. If applicable, describe how stipends will be used for participants and attach a copy of your WDA's Stipend Policy.

Stipends are not currently being used. The PIC Youth Programs has no stipend policy.

15. Describe how co-enrollments will be facilitated for youth, including a summary of all funds that are "braided or blended" with participants beyond WIOA Youth Formula Grant funds and MYP funds.

The PIC will continue to utilize co-enrollments, with both public assistances, adult WIOA programs, career pathway programs (Pathways to Prosperity, Adult Basic Education, and MFIP/TANF), Youth at Work, and/or Youth Support Services to ensure that participants are being fully served. As appropriate, youth are co-enrolled with other funding sources to leverage and maximize resources. WIOA Youth participants may also be co-enrolled into the Minnesota Youth Program or other youth-focused employment and training programs (MFIP Teen Parents, Career Pathways, Career and Technical Education (Perkins), Pre-ETS and the Youth Intervention Program) to ensure a smooth transition to WIOA and to provide youth with additional opportunities.

All support services received by the participant are recorded in WF1. This provides staff the ability to view all financial support services received by the participant and avoid duplication. Staff from each participating program will staff spending plans, strategies for success, setbacks, and goals achieved, on a regular basis.

16. Describe local partnerships to serve "opportunity youth" who have significant barriers to employment and/or youth who are under-served and under-represented in the workforce, including:

The PIC has well established partnerships and collaboratives to meet the needs of residents and the workforce. The partners are passionate about making a positive impact for all individuals in our region, which will also impact their families, and ultimately result in a stronger workforce for our employers. This group of organizations and a core group of leaders have worked together for over a decade providing innovative programming. It is a proven collaborative where each partner executes its expertise, avoids duplication of services, and works to ensure each partners success. Many members of the collaborative group also serve on the WIOA Youth Committee. The collaborative group has received state and national recognition on multiple occasions over the years.

Partners understand the specific needs of the target audience and the need to incorporate career pathways into the participants work and family lives for optimal success. The strength of the partnership is collaboration and understanding of each

agency's missions & strengths and utilizing that to navigate for the success of the student.

- Dropouts and potential dropouts: For potential dropouts, the Youth Committee and PIC youth employment specialist are instrumental in connecting the youth with the appropriate supports and resources needed to obtain their high-school diploma. The partnerships in southwest Minnesota know where and how to access appropriate services and resources needed to assist a youth from not dropping out of school. This knowledge base and partnership make for a more efficient flow of services and resources to the youth in need.

For school dropouts who have obtained their GED, or those potential dropouts who obtain a high school diploma while participating in the PIC youth and young adult programs and are interested in advancing their education, and attending college, a career assessment is conducted as appropriate to determine whether the individual's aptitude and skill levels reflect for potential success. Labor market information is also provided to the individual to provide them detail regarding employment opportunities, education requirements and salary ranges. A financial review of the individual's case is conducted and if there is an unmet financial need identified then financial resources may be provided to support tuition and book costs. Many OSY need to develop career success skills before they are ready to succeed in unsubsidized employment. They may also lack the experience necessary to secure employment. As a part of WIOA Youth's 14 elements, WDA 6 has been addressing these barriers by providing experiential and work-based learning opportunities via paid internships/work experience opportunities for since 1985. Through a proven track record of success, we know work experience provides OSY the opportunity to gain the skills and experience necessary to find success in the workplace.

PIC youth staff are licensed social workers or have human service related degrees, decades of combined experience assisting OSY with career advisory services including individual assessments, understanding area labor market information, career exploration, work readiness skill development, job seeking skills, essential skills, work experience, job retention, occupational skills training, barrier identification, employment and education plan development, problem solving, resource and referral, and mobilizing community resources to overcome barriers to employment.

- Youth with language and/or cultural barriers to employment: It is a priority of the PIC to provide culturally responsive services that result in excellent outcomes. To facilitate this commitment, the board has established a Diversity/Emerging Workforce Committee. The goal of the committee is to address employment disparities, seek feedback and engage communities of color, and to evaluate and improve the cultural responsiveness of the organization.

PIC youth employment specialist collaborates closely with the Southwest MN ABE Consortium. When it is determined that language or cultural barriers to education or employment exist a referral to ESL classes is made. Bilingual staff and interpreters are also available. The PIC has in-house staff available to provide interpreter services to Spanish and Thai speaking participants. When necessary, the language line may be used, or interpreters hired to assist. Southwest MN PIC strongly encourages and supports staff to attend DEI trainings to learn how to incorporate programming approaches such as: acknowledging student's differences as well as their commonalities, validate student's cultural identity, educate students about diversity of the world around them, and promote equity and mutual respect. Youth staff works with the schools Community Connectors/Liaisons and Integration Collaboratives to incorporate program approaches.

In partnership with Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU) Office of Cultural Diversity, Admissions, Southwest West Central Service Cooperative, Southwest Adult Basic Education, and Minnesota West, annual Major Madness events at SMSU in Marshall and Minnesota West in Worthington is held where English Language Learner students learned about professional and academic opportunities after high school. Students discovered what training options are available and how they can prepare for a range of career paths while hearing from a diverse group of area professionals that shared their experiences on how they developed in their careers. Additionally, students heard from their peers in college who talked to them about Admissions, Financial Aid, and their college/work experiences. Evaluations of the event demonstrated it to be successful and meaningful for both students and the teachers.

PIC demonstrates cultural responsiveness through: 1) a commitment from senior leadership and the board to provide culturally responsive services; 2) the mission, structure, policies, and procedures; 3) all program participants feeling valued, programming that builds on their strengths, 4) translation or interpretation services being available; 5) a diverse representation of the board and staff members; 6) engaged ethnic communities in the planning and implementation of services; 7) staff trained in the cultures and traditions of communities of color; and 8) personal performance measures that include skills related cultural responsiveness.

The PIC understands the benefit of seeing a diverse and new immigrant population as strength in the community and a solution to workforce shortages. The implementation of the actions outlined above is the work of the board's equity committee. Utilizing community members, past participants and organizational cultural responsiveness assessments, the committee will evaluate the organization's cultural responsiveness and work to continually improve on an ongoing basis.

- Youth in foster care and aging out of foster care: PIC youth employment specialists coordinate with county social workers, school counselors, and private agencies dealing with foster care to provide employment services to youth being served through the foster care system. In addition to the WIOA and MYP resources, resources from the Youth Intervention Program grant are available to serve the foster care population. The representative for Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Pipestone, and Rock counties Support for Emancipation and Living Functionally (SELF) Program through the MN Department of Human Resources is a member of the Youth Committee, and strong collaboration between the two organizations allow for work experience and career pathway services to be delivered in conjunction with the services provided through the SELF program.
- Homeless youth or runaways: Support services, training and employment opportunities are provided to youth who are identified as homeless. Referrals come through schools, community action agencies and Human service agencies. Youth staff coordinate closely with county human services staff to assure that appropriate services and resources are available to assist the homeless youth in their transition. Youth staff are members of boards and committee which focus on the homeless and hungry population in southwest Minnesota, specifically participates in our local Continuum of Care.
- Youth offenders and at-risk of involvement with the juvenile justice system: Referrals for offender and at-risk youth are made through the ALCs, group homes, community corrections, circle sentencing or other youth-serving agencies working with youth offenders or those at-risk of becoming involved with the juvenile justice system. Periodic meetings are held with those referral sources to keep them familiar with the programs/services so additional referrals can be made. PIC staff attend Coalition meetings comprised of DOC representatives. PIC is a recipient of the Department of Public Safety Juvenile Justice Youth Intervention Program funding (YIP) which PIC youth programs promote positive youth development, a component of work-based learning (WBL) which enables youth to thrive and flourish in their teen years, and prepares them for a healthy, happy, and safe adulthood. Positive youth development involves youth as active agents. Adults may set the structure, but youth are not just the recipient of services. Youth are valued and are encouraged to bring their assets to the table. Adults and youth work in partnership. Youth can attend, actively participate, contribute, or lead (if they prefer) through positive youth development activities including career pathway training, essential skills training, and work experience.

PIC address the following outcomes with YIP:

- 1) Increase participants decision-making skills;
- 2) development and maintenance of relationships with positive, caring adults;
- 3) Increase in independent living skills; and
- 4) Increase in participant's school attendance through work experience, hands-on career exploration, life skills workshops, essential skills training, and career pathway training.

- Youth with disabilities:
 1. Staff work with special needs teachers in high schools and alternative schools to address the employment needs of students with disabilities;
 2. Staff participate on the local CTIC's, providing avenues for direct involvement in discussions and services directly impacting the Youth clients;
- 3. The Project SEARCH program in SW MN is based on the successful international program, which was developed at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center in 1996 and hosts over 500 sites world-wide. The program serves as an opportunity for students to transition from high school to community employment by working during the school year. Students are provided an opportunity to participate in a variety of 8-10-week internship rotations at the hospital that best meet their interests, experiences, and abilities. A job coach, program instructor, and department staff work with the students (and IEP team) to help them develop the necessary interpersonal and job skills to gain meaningful employment. Avera Marshall is the host partner for the program in southwest Minnesota and has for the past four years. The Avera Marshall program was developed in 2011 through the cooperation of: Regional independent school districts, SW/WC Service Cooperative, SW MN Private Industry Council, Vocational Rehab Services, Avera Marshall Medical Center, Minnesota West Community and Technical College, and Advance Opportunities.
- 4. Staff attend IEP meetings and consult with Vocational Rehabilitative Services (VRS) counselors to assist with future planning;
- 5. PIC is a Limited Use Vendor for VRS counselors to provide high-quality, cost-effective services to in-school youth with disabilities. Pre-ETS services include job exploration counseling; work experiences in an integrated environment in the community (including internships in public and private sector); workplace readiness training; and related support services. More intensive supports such as job coaching are arranged and paid for separately by VRS. PIC youth employment specialists and VRS counselors meet regularly to discuss their shared caseloads. Regular meetings contribute to more effective, coordinated, and cost-effective services for youth. Stronger working relationships between VRS counselors and WIOA youth staff provides the foundation for ongoing collaboration on behalf of youth; and
- 6. Coordination with PACER Center. PACER Center will be responsible for developing and delivering project activities for the DEI project. PACER Center is nationally recognized for their expertise on family engagement, evidence-based transition practices, and assistive technology. PACER provides technical assistance, resources, workshops, and referrals to families and professionals on employment and postsecondary education for youth with disabilities. PACER's National Parent Center on Transition and Employment has a content-rich web site, www.pacer.org/transition, Facebook page www.facebook.com/npcte, and e-news, all featuring information, resources, and opportunities for transition-age youth with disabilities, their families, and professionals. PACER's Simon Technology Center www.pacer.org/stc/ provides assistive technology training

and expertise to help both youth and adults with disabilities reach their educational, career and independent living goals. Other PACER programs focus on health, housing, and bullying prevention. PACER has experience working with BIPOC communities. PACER offers publications in Hmong, Somali and Spanish.

- Teen parents: SW MN Private Industry Council (PIC) is the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) Employment and Training service provider in WDA 6. Referrals of identified MFIP eligible youth are easily made between the PIC MFIP Job Counselors and the PIC Youth employment specialist. PIC youth employment specialists provide county human services and public health staff of available services and seek referrals. PIC staff provide applications and materials to county personnel, to assist with identifying and recruiting individuals for the program. Teen parents are a priority for service. Teen parents can be co-enrolled in WIOA and/or MFIP and/or DWP. Services include, but are not limited to: career awareness, career exploration, career assessments, job keeping/seeking skills, life-long learning skills, scholarship opportunities, and labor market information, work experience and support services.
- Youth of color and other under-served, under-represented youth populations: WDA 6 works closely with regional youth serving organizations to ensure under-served and under-represented youth populations are receiving applicable resources. Partnerships with the Nobles County Integration Collaborative, Lower Sioux Indian Community, Area Adult Basic Education ESL programs, Yellow Medicine Integration Collaborative, and others are key to expand outreach and increased services.

The PIC understands the benefit of seeing a diverse and new immigrant population as strength in the community and a solution to workforce shortages. The implementation of the actions outlined above is the work of the board's Diversity/Emerging Workforce committee. Utilizing community members, past participants and organizational cultural competency assessments, the committee will evaluate the organization's cultural responsiveness and work to continually improve on an ongoing basis.

To address the disparities in education and employment, the Region 5 Rural Career Counseling Coordinator (RC3) played a key role in bringing additional resources to area from the Greater Twin Cities United Way to launch Career Academies/Career Pathway programming into the most diverse secondary schools in our region. Students earn high school credit, college credit and gain marketable skills in high demand occupations while in high school. Work-Based Learning is a significant component to our region's Career Academies/Career Pathway programming. The RC3 role increased capacity of the LWDA (6 & 8) to act as the intermediary organizations connecting business and education to expand and support work-based learning opportunities under the career pathway approach- internships, work experience, job shadow, employer guest

speakers, industry tours, apprenticeship by providing Youth Career Connectors as staff to support students and employers who are engaged in the work-based learning opportunities. Real-world applications and work experiences in combination with key training provide paths to educational and career advancement building our local talent pipeline to help employers meet their needs for a skilled workforce.

Through the work of our region's Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment (CLNA) process required for our local Perkins Plan, it was identified the lack of students of color engaged in Career and Technical Education. In 2021, in partnership with Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU) Office of Cultural Diversity, Admissions, Southwest West Central Service Cooperative, Southwest Adult Basic Education, Minnesota West, and the PIC hosted a Major Madness event at SMSU in Marshall where English Language Learner students learned about professional and academic opportunities after high school. Students discovered what training options are available and how they can prepare for a range of career paths while hearing from a diverse group of area professionals that shared their experiences with these students that focused on how they developed in their careers. Additionally, students heard from their peers in college who talked to them about Admissions, Financial Aid, and their college/work experiences. Evaluations of the event demonstrated it was successful and meaningful for both students and the teachers. The partnership has made it an annual event in two locations of the region: Marshall and Worthington.

17. Describe how the Work Readiness Indicator will be implemented for youth participants and whether this is used for WIOA participants, MYP participants, or both. If the WDA uses a standardized form for measuring and documenting work readiness skills, please attach a copy.

- Approach to assuring work readiness skill attainment for youth participants
- Approach to assuring that the worksite supervisor evaluates work readiness skills of youth participants, including a process for documenting the employer's evaluation of the youth participant's work readiness skills.

When a student enters a work experience or internship opportunity, the student participates in work readiness training and answers questions to measure their understanding of the material. Under question #8, the worksite supervisor evaluation of youth participants is detailed.

18. If the WDA is planning to provide Outreach to Schools activities as a component of MYP in SFY 2025, please provide an overview and anticipated goals/objectives.

Region 5, the Rural Career Counseling Coordinator (RC3) conducted an asset mapping gap analysis of the career advising and career pathway coursework. Throughout the region, in interviews with nearly half of the secondary schools, it was found that small

rural schools have very limited, if any, staff time dedicated to career advising. For larger schools that could afford a full-time guidance counselor, only about 35% of their time was dedicated to career advising. Additionally, the vast majority of schools visited indicated they were not sharing current labor market information with students, stating they lacked the time to research and package the information for students. The need to provide career services in the region's school districts is critical. Tight labor markets and a scarcity of workers are now recognized as southwest Minnesota's most significant barrier to future economic growth, it is essential that all students graduate and know their path to in demand occupations.

Outreach to Schools (OTS) is a partnership between the Work Development Area 6 Board, (LWDA) – Southwest Minnesota Youth Committee and local educational agencies. Outreach to School addresses a strategy for delivering effective education planning, career counseling and labor market information to the region's youth and families. The PIC staff will work with students in area schools to assist them with education and career planning, including, but not limited to:

- A. Provide information to individuals and groups regarding occupations and industries in demand and with the highest growth throughout the region. Current labor market information along with providing opportunities for students to directly experience occupations through job shadowing, mentoring and business tours will be used.
- B. Partner with local school districts on parent/teacher conference evenings to present on topics such as: career planning, career exploration, labor market information, job seeking resources, and more.
- C. Staff will provide workshops on planning for post-secondary training, accessing financial aid and selecting an appropriate program, goal setting and navigating business culture. Providing opportunities to interact with local business and industry through business tours, business and industry speaker panels, job shadowing, and mentoring will be implemented.
- D. Provide individual counseling and career exploration including career assessments, resume preparation, job search assistance, and mock interviews.
- E. Tours of CareerForce locations and information about the resources available at CareerForce and how to access and utilize the resources.
- F. Local career fairs, career events, and tours of businesses in strategic industries will provide connections to community and private sector resources. Assist with coordinating career fairs at local high schools promoting employment, internships, and post high school apprenticeship options with employers.
- G. Group and individual counseling including instruction and presentations on career planning, labor market information and high growth industries and demand occupations of local employers.
- H. Individualized counseling including career exploration and career assessments, resume preparation, mock interviews, and job search assistance. Youth Employment Specialists & Youth Career Connectors are available to all of the region's secondary schools, post-secondary school campuses and our two local tribal nations to provide organized tours of local businesses for student to learn

about local career and education opportunities that will lead to long-term careers in the region. By providing this access, students will be able to speak with PIC staff, discuss the development of an educational plan related to their intended career path, and receive assistance with testing preparation, college and job applications and financial aid forms. The Outreach to Schools program encourages youth to pursue education leading to high pay, high demand, or sustainable careers focusing on career pathways, and will provide greater access to services than most schools alone can provide. Through the Region 5 WIOA regional planning, identified issues identified include the shortage of a skilled workforce, employment disparities, and the need for more career counseling, including educating youth and parents on career opportunities in the region, and connecting education and business.

Administrators feel these services add value to their schools and courses as it ensures additional exposure for students by having PIC staff available as a single point of contacting, and by providing organized tours of local businesses for student to learn about local job and educational opportunities that will lead to long-term careers in the region. Students, teachers, and parents are grateful to have PIC representatives on site and available to assist students with education and career planning.

19. Describe Youth-Focused Innovations/Best Practices, including (but not limited to):

- **Attach** the Shared Vision for Youth Blueprint to identify local interagency partnerships which serve the neediest youth and address the “opportunity gap”, “achievement gap”, and disparities in the workforce. (See Attachment 3)
- Private sector internships, on-the-job training, mentoring, job shadowing, pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship training.

Our regional collaborative is creating opportunities for youth to work and learn advanced skills leading to higher wages. The Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council (PIC) was an early innovator/implementer of the Career Pathways/ Pathways to Prosperity programs in the state of Minnesota and the PIC youth programs were selected three years in a row as award winners of the Minnesota Association of Workforce Development Boards Promising Practices awards.

PIC continues to implement earn and learn practices by providing a continuum of career development activities and experiences. PIC is intentional about providing a series of work-based learning activities, career focused events and workplace experiences tailored and aligned with specific industries and occupations, providing participants with opportunities to apply what they are learning and build their skills and knowledge.

The PIC provides a continuum of services including career awareness, career exploration, career pathway preparation and credentialed skills training with work-based learning opportunities where students often earn both secondary and post-secondary credit. Additionally, the goal is to create career pathways for students while creating systems change and aligning and strengthening partnerships locally to better inform students and parents about local labor market needs, create in-demand Career & Technical courses in the high schools and college and provide work-based learning opportunities for students.

Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council continues its work to enrich, expand and be more intentional with the work-based learning experiences available to students in southwest Minnesota. The most critical resource to the success of the proposed work is the Youth Career Connector. The Youth Career Connector are responsible to carry out the work: provide career advisory services; facilitate career exploration activities, training opportunities & engaging employers for OJT and mentorship; expand/support employer partners; maintain program data; and overall, nurture partnerships that lead to excellent outcomes. For many students, they are engaging with employers for the first time, some have been unsuccessful, others are going beyond what they ever considered possible. Support, connections, and encouragement are critical and necessary. PIC recently achieved the ability to hire three Youth Career Connectors for each of our 3 offices through diversifying funds and building on the relationships built with our partners.

The key partners and their roles and responsibilities in the Southwest Minnesota Career Pathway project are listed below. This group of organizations and a core group of leaders have worked together for over a decade providing innovative programming to youth and adults. It is a proven collaborative where each partner executes its expertise, avoids duplication of services, and works to ensure each partners success. The collaborative group has received state and national recognition on multiple occasions over the years. The partners include:

- A. Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council (PIC): The PIC provides the Navigator for initiating and coordinating employer engagement; facilitating and coordinating career awareness, career exploration, and career preparation and training activities including work readiness/essential skills instruction; daily coordinating between schools, students, and employers; and providing assessments, case management, and support services to students. The PIC serves as a single point of contact for employers to work with the region's schools and for schools to work with regional employers. The PIC also coordinates post-secondary training and work-based learning opportunities, including pre-apprenticeships.
- B. Local Area High Schools, Charter Schools and Alternative Schools: Schools

partner with the PIC to determine and plan the types of career advising and exploration services that best meets the needs of their students. Schools also help chaperone students at events. Additionally, schools will register students for Career Pathway Training or CTE Courses; provide instruction, space, and equipment; and issue academic credit or credentials as applicable.

- C. Southwest West Central Service Cooperative: The SWSC is a convener of multiple school districts and facilitates collaborative CTE course offerings working out fiscal and logistical details, facilitates the Launch Your Future Today (LYFT) pathways initiative in providing funding, sharing best practices, accessing instructors, and overall helps to support CTE courses as needed.
- D. Employers: Employers provide input on curriculum and engage in work-based learning opportunities and supervises/mentors students. WBL opportunities include business tours, presentations, informational interviews, job shadows, on-the-job training/paid work experience, internships, and apprenticeships.
- E. Adult Basic Education: ABE provides basic skills assessment, instruction to boost reading and math skills in preparation for college level courses and tutoring to ensure post-secondary success.
- F. Minnesota West Community & Technical College and Southwest Minnesota State University: The college/university provides space, equipment, and course instruction leading to industry-recognized credentials and post-secondary credit.
- G. Community Based Organizations - Community Based Organizations provide referrals and partners when addressing individual barriers to success. Another important and related initiative in the region that the PIC has been a partner in is the Launch Your Future Today (LYFT) Pathways initiative (www.lyftpathways.org). LYFT is a rural Community and Technical Education (CTE) pathway initiative with the purpose of rebuilding CTE in southwest and west central Minnesota. CTE courses in the secondary schools have steadily declined since the 1980s. Some rural schools were not even able to offer a CTE course, leaving many students who were not college bound without opportunities to learn and develop marketable skills. As a School to Career Intermediary, the PIC has been instrumental in providing more depth to these new CTE courses by coordinating WBL opportunities related to the course instruction. As new CTE courses are added across the region, this creates additional opportunities to provide these impactful services to greater numbers of students from all backgrounds.

- Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) project - The Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council (PIC) has applied again to be a Limited Use Vendor for Vocational Rehabilitation Services to provide Pre-ETS. Pre-ETS help students with disabilities participate and be successful in the stages of career development, including career awareness; career exploration, career preparation, and career placement; while playing a primary role in helping students and their families navigate the complex multi-agency career pathways system.
- Strategies implemented during the Disability Employment Initiative including: Integrated Resource Teams (IRTs); expanded collaboration with local partners, including Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS); and activities related to the “Guideposts for Success” such as employability skills/work experience, career preparation, leadership development, family engagement, and connecting activities.

Integrated Resource Teams are being utilized with many participants and have been effective because participants and their guardians enjoy the ease of navigating the various systems and collaborating to secure the services needed to put the individuals plan into action. The Southwest Youth Committee continues to frame its goals, objectives, and strategies around the Guideposts for Success, and through our delivery of Pre-ETS we have expanded collaboration with VRS.

- Strategies for coordinating with after-school and out-of-school time programming.

Youth Services in WDA 6 are viewed as a coordinated and collaborative strategy. Partners provide updates at the Youth Committee meetings. This provides an opportunity for the service delivery design to be coordinated with other youth programs throughout the services in the region.

WDA 6 has an extensive network of youth-service agencies which provides support or funding for activities offered in conjunction with partner agencies. It also provides an opportunity to offer an employment component to enhance other provider programming. Examples include: 1) work closely with community corrections to provide the employment piece to adjudicated youth; 2) coordinating with Minnesota West Community and Technical Colleges to provide on campus hands-on Career Exploration sessions to eligible students; 3) assisting with Career Exploration Days sponsored by an area school consortium; 4) referring eligible youth to Career Pathway programs; and 5) provide work experience programs along with other CareerForce location partners with high schools.

The PIC youth program has organized a network of agencies and community members with an interest in helping youth succeed in education and employment. Youth are referred through a variety of sources including schools, human service agencies, public health, post-secondary education institutions, adult basic education, community corrections departments, parents, and past or current participants.

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Minnesota Youth Programs(MYP), services offered include work experiences, career exploration activities, post-secondary tuition assistance, and job seeking/retention assistance, transition services and support services to provide greater opportunities for everyone's future.

In addition to WIOA and MYP services, the PIC leverages resources, including Youth Intervention Program (YIP), and other local resources to create value added after and out of school programming.

PIC youth employment specialists have a long history of working closely with school work coordinators, special education managers, and other school personnel, to coordinate after school work opportunities for qualifying youth. PIC will continue offering these opportunities to develop skills and, when coupled with the additional guidance and support of the youth staff, provide them with an increased likelihood of workplace success beyond their high school years.

- Connections with MFIP and SNAP partners to assure policy alignment for youth under age 25.

PIC is the MFIP service provider in WDA 6; therefore, the referrals of identified MFIP eligible youth are made by the PIC MFIP Job Counselors directly to the PIC Youth employment specialist. The PIC has a strong network between the counties and the CareerForce partners. This network system allows for direct recruitment of potential youth through direct contact with case workers and financial workers. PIC staff provide applications and materials to county personnel to assist with identifying and recruiting individuals for the youth services.

The PIC provides work experience and career pathway training to eligible MFIP youth participants. The MFIP Job Counselor and/or county worker (with a release of information signed by participant and if applicable parent/guardian) will provide youth staff with any assessment and detailed information regarding barriers that may directly impact the work experience placement. The PIC youth employment specialist meets with the eligible TANF summer youth to identify areas of interest, barriers, and abilities. When necessary TANF summer youth will take a formal career assessment to define more clear interest and aptitude areas.

When appropriate, the TANF Innovative Project participants are co-enrolled in WIOA Youth and/or MYP to leverage additional resources and maximize value to the individual.

20. Describe the WDA's approach to making each of the 14 required youth Program Elements available to participants in WIOA [P.L 113-128, Sec 129(c)(2) and individually defined and discussed in the final rules at 20 CFR 681.460] by completing the WIOA Youth Program Elements Checklist below. Also respond to the following for each of the 14 required elements:

- a. If the element is provided by another agency (or agencies) describe how the WDA ensures participants are receiving appropriate service levels.
- b. Summarize whether or not WIOA youth funds are used, and/or other funding sources are braided or blended to offset some (or all) of the cost of delivering that particular service.
- c. Summarize how the required program element is delivered to participants and any “best practices” associated with that element.

WIOA Youth Program Elements Checklist

Program Element	How Each Program Element is Offered							How program element is coded and entered in MIS
	In House	Partner Agreement			Provider Name(s)	Supporting Documentation	Notes	
		Contract	MOU	Other				
1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and dropout prevention	X						Barriers are identified and addressed by PIC staff. Referrals are made as needed.	Documented through WF1 activities
2. Alternative secondary school services or dropout recovery services			X		ABE		Referrals are made to ABE. PIC works on eliminating any barriers.	Documented through WF1 activities
3. Paid and unpaid work experiences	X						PIC provides coordination for youth to receive paid and unpaid work experiences.	Documented through WF1 activities

4. Occupational skill training			X		MN West Community and Technical College		In partnership with MN West, occupation skills training is offered that will lead to high demand, high paying jobs	Documented through WF1 activities
5. Education offered concurrently with workforce preparation for a specific occupation	X						Information is shared and referrals made as necessary	Documented through WF1 activities
6. Leadership development opportunities	X						Leadership development opportunities are shared and encouraged by PIC staff	Documented through WF1 activities
7. Supportive services	X						Support services are provided as needed to ensure success for youth participants.	Documented through WF1 activities

8. Adult mentoring	X						Youth receive positive adult mentoring from PIC staff, community and business leaders, and well as worksite supervisors if applicable	Documented through WF1 activities
9. Follow-up services	X						Youth participants receive regular follow up services to ensure continued success	Documented through WF1 activities
10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling	X						Students are advised based on their needs and interests.	Documented through WF1 activities
11. Financial literacy education	X						Information is shared and referrals made as needed.	Documented through WF1 activities
12. Entrepreneurial skills training	X						Information is shared and referrals	Documented through WF1 activities

							made as needed	
13. Services that provide labor market information	X						Labor Market Information is available for students. They are also encouraged to research.	Documented through WF1 activities
14. Post-secondary preparation and transition activities	X						Information is shared and referrals made as needed	Documented through WF1 activities

WIOA Youth Program Element Section 129 (c)(2)	Is the element further described in Final Rule? If so, application citations	Relates to or overlaps with other program element?	Applicable PIRL Data Element Number(s)
1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction and dropout prevention	No	Program elements 2 and 4	1402
2. Alternative secondary school services or dropout recovery services	No	Program element 1	1403
3. Paid and unpaid work experiences	Yes, 681.600, 681.590, 681.480		
4. Occupational skills training	Yes, 681.540, 681.550	Program element 1	1300, 1302, 1303, 1306, 1307, 1308
5. Education offered concurrently with workforce preparation and training for a specific occupation	Yes, 681.630	Program elements 2, 3, and 4	1407
6. Leadership development opportunities	Yes, 681.520, 681.530		1408
7. Supportive services	Yes, 681.570		1409

8. Adult mentoring	Yes, 681.490		1410
9. Follow-up services	Yes, 681.580	Program elements 7, 8, 11, 13, and 14	1412
10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling	Yes, 681.580		1411
11. Financial literacy education	Yes, 681.500		1206
12. Entrepreneurial skills training	Yes, 681.560		1413
13. Services that provide labor market information	Yes, 651.10		1414
14. Postsecondary preparation and transition activities	No		1415

Attachment 1H

Workplan: Youth Program Service Delivery Design Addendum to Enhance Services to In-School Youth (ISY) Who Are Homeless or in Foster Care (Applies to WIOA Youth funded programs ONLY)

IMPORTANT NOTE: The waiver granted by the U.S. Department of Labor to the State of Minnesota allows WDAs the option to enhance services to homeless, in-school youth and foster care youth who are in school and reduce the statutory requirement for OSY expenditures from 75 percent to 60 percent. If your WDA plans to implement this waiver please complete the following questions.

Questions to be completed:

1. Please describe your WDA's strategies for outreach and recruitment of homeless in-school youth and/or in-school youth in foster care.
2. Identify school district(s) you would anticipate working with to recruit homeless, in-school youth and in-school foster care youth.
3. What services would you anticipate may need to be provided above and beyond what you are already offering?

