



# **Workforce Development Board Plan Modification for Fiscal Years 2017–2020**

*Workforce Solutions Cameron is an Equal Employment Opportunity Employer/Program  
Auxiliary Aids available for individuals with disabilities  
Relay Texas 1800-735-2989 TDD or 1800-735-2988*

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## Acronyms

ABE	Adult Basic Education	MHMR	Mental Health Mental Retardation
AEL	Adult Education & Literacy	MOU	Memorandum Of Understanding
ASE	Adult Secondary Education	MPR	Monthly Performance Report
BISD	Brownsville Independent School District	MSFW	Migrant Seasonal Farm-Worker
BSU	Business Services Unit	NCP	Non-Custodial Parent Program
CBO	Community Based Organization	NRF	National Retail Federation
CC	Child Care	NINOS	Neighbors in Need of Services, Inc.
CCJJD	Cameron County Juvenile Justice Department	O*NET	Occupational Information Network
CDCB	Community Development Corporation of Brownsville	OJT	On-the-Job Training
CEOs	Chief Elected Officials	PPS	Partners for Postsecondary Success
COG	Councils of Government	PUF	Permanent University Funding
CLF	Civilian Labor Force	RFP	Request For Proposal
CTC	Committee and Technical Colleges	RSTEC	Rio South Texas Economic Council
CTE	Career & Technical Education	RTAP	Regional Transportation Advisory Panel
DADS	Department of Aging and Disability Services	RTD	Rural Transit District
DARS	Department of Assistive & Rehabilitative Services	RTI	Related Training and Instruction
DBS	Division of Blind Services	SCEP	Senior Community Service Employment Program
DFPS	Department of Family & Protective Services	SDF	Skills Development Fund
DOE	Department of Energy	SSF	Self Sufficiency Fund
E&T	Education & Training	SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
ED	Executive Director	SSB	Skills for Small Business
EDC	Economic Development Corporation	STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Math
EN	Employer Network	TANF	Temporary Assistance to Needy Families
ES	Employment Services	TEA	Texas Education Agency
ESL	English as a Second Language	TRS	Texas School Ready (TSR) Project
ETP	Eligible Training Provider	TSC	Texas Southmost College
GED	General Equivalency Education	TSTC	Texas State Technical College
HHS	Health & Human Services	TVC	Texas Veteran's Commission
HS	High School	TVLP	Texas Veteran's Leadership Program
HUD	Housing and Urban Development	TWC	Texas Workforce Commission
HWOL	Help Wanted On-Line	TWIST	The Workforce Information System of Texas
IHE	Institution of Higher Education	UI	Unemployment Insurance
IHEAS	Institution of Higher Education Academy of Sciences	UTRGV	University of Texas Rio Grande Valley
IEP	Individual Employment Plan	VRS	Vocational Rehabilitation Services
ISDs	Independent School Districts	WCCT	Workforce Career Center Traffic
ITA	Individual Training Account	WD	Workforce Development
JET	Jobs and Education for Texans	WDB	Workforce Development Board
LMCI	Labor Market and Career Information	WDA	Workforce Development Area
LNG	Liquid Nitrogen Gas	WFS	Workforce Solutions
LRGVDC	Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council	WIA	Workforce Investment Act
MET	Migrant Education & Training	WIOA	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
		WIT	Work In Texas
		VAIL	Valley Assistance for Independent Living
		TAA	Trade Adjustment Assistance

# Workforce Development Board Plan for Fiscal Years 2017–2020

## Part A: Strategic Elements

The strategic elements of the Local Workforce Development Board Planning Guidelines (Guidelines) are as follows:

### Boards' Vision

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

#### **Board Response:**

As the Workforce Development Board for Cameron County, WFS Cameron is charged with overseeing and directing workforce activities that support economic development initiatives through employer linkages. The WFS Cameron Board of Directors serves as the governing board for the regional workforce system, a network of service providers and contractors that brings people and jobs together. The Board represents the Cameron County area, with a Board membership that reflects the diverse constituencies of the region: business, economic development, education, labor, community organizations, and government.

The WFS Cameron Board works under a Partnership Agreement with the local Chief Elected Officials (CEOs), which include the Cameron County Judge and the Mayor of Brownsville. Working together, the Board and the CEOs provide leadership over the WFS Cameron workforce system, working to ensure that the area has an educated, skilled workforce.

The Mission, Vision, and Board Goal Statements for Workforce Solutions Cameron (WFS Cameron) for FY 2013-2018 were originally developed by the Board of Directors (Board) at a Strategic Planning meeting held on October 27, 2012, are as follows, but have since been expanded by Board approval at its January 26, 2017 Board Meeting to specify additional goals, objectives, and activities required by the new WIOA law of 2014, and/or as prioritized by the Board of Directors. These statements, presented in table format, endeavor to illustrate that the Board works with a variety of regional partners in a collaborative process to collectively achieve economic growth that enables the workforce occupational demand to increase—thus providing the opportunity for more area job seekers to reach self-sufficiency.

**Mission Statement:** *“Workforce Solutions Cameron is the local workforce partnership organization devoted to promoting and supporting a workforce structure that provides employers and individuals of Cameron County the opportunity to achieve and sustain economic prosperity.”*

**Vision Statement:** *Workforce Solutions Cameron is the premier, proven provider of high quality workforce resources for Cameron County.*

**WFS Cameron Board Goals FY 2017-2020:** *As narrated and expanded below, these Goals, objectives, and strategies support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency, and include goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment, and goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on performance indicators described in WIOA Section 116(b)(2)(A).*

**1. Increase presence and linkages with Employers.**

- *Increase outreach, marketing, and enrollment efforts to employers across the County through aggressive Business Services Unit (BSU) practices.*
- *Work with training providers and employers to better align career and technical education with local industry skill requirements.*
- *Continue to inform and assist employers as to Skills Development and Skills for Small Business grant opportunities.*
- *Identify under-utilized talent pools, such as Foster Youth, individuals with special needs, and residents of underserved areas to increase their marketability through community partnerships, training, support services, and resources that promote linkages with employers.*

**2. Facilitate the preparation of an educated and skilled workforce, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment.**

- *Promote and help structure training services with Career & Technical Colleges (CTCs) and other training providers that provide portable, stackable, and transferable credits and credentials.*
- *Continue to promote and facilitate business and industry internships for high school CTE and college technical students with other partner agencies to help students bond with their chosen career pathway.*
- *Increase Pre-Apprenticeship and Registered Apprenticeship programs with Independent School Districts and CTCs that align with WFS Cameron Targeted Occupations.*
- *Participate in the design of local initiatives that focus on building technical education programs in STEM and other skilled trades areas.*
- *Participate in the design, support, and funding of marketing campaigns that increase awareness and parental support for technical education career pathways.*
- *Promote fully articulated and aligned career pathways from ISDs to CTCs to Universities, as appropriate for building the skill sets needed by industry in each vocation.*
- *Support small business assistance centers, business incubators, entrepreneurial training, and related new business formation activities.*

**3. Attain exceptional performance ratings on all Texas Workforce Commission accountability performance measures.**

- *Continue to strengthen policies and procedures at Board and Contractor levels to support an environment of expertise to be able to excel in all TWC-contracted performance measures.*
- *Promote a continuous improvement process to ensure accountability, integrity, quality, and transparency across all workforce programs.*
- *Develop and maintain appropriate internal accounting controls to provide assurance of properly recorded, timely transactions in accordance to federal and state regulations.*
- *Continue to apply sufficient monitoring and staff professional development to insure compliance with Personal Identifiable Information (PII) regulations.*

**4. Improve the quality of workforce services to Employers and Job Seekers.**

- *Continue to refine policies and procedures under the new WIOA law to fully integrate, maximize, and support services to employers and job seekers.*
- *Continue to build new partnerships with industry/education councils (EDCs, CTCs) that identify and fill skill gaps in training programs.*
- *Expand professional development activities for staff to ensure their dealings with employers and job seekers are always of the highest performance and knowledge standards.*
- *Continue to participate in TWC seminars and training sessions to stay abreast of new rules and requirements of service and of best practices available for adoption by our Board to improve the quality and quantity of services offered.*
- *Work with Contractor to analyze and improve customer work flows to improve quality and speed of service and the highest level of customer service to job seekers.*
- *Investigate feasibility of assisting targeted populations of homeless persons, parolees, and youth offenders through grants or cooperative partnerships with other agencies.*

**5. Ensure accountability and transparency in all matters and actions.**

- *Continue to provide appropriate levels of oversight, internal and external monitoring of all core program activities and financial operations.*
- *Continue appropriate reporting of risk assessment and monitoring reports to the Board of Directors and the Chief Elected Officials.*
- *Continue monthly activity reporting to the Board of Directors.*
- *Set in place a regular review schedule of all policies, both programmatic and financial, to insure compliance and appropriateness with WIOA law, TWC Guidelines, and federal agency rules.*

**6. Increase presence and image while building community relationships.**

- *Continue the design and implementation of social media marketing and outreach strategies to more fully engage our constituency in available programs and services.*
- *Continue membership and participation in local collective impact groups whose efforts are associated with economic development, education, and social services.*

- *Participate in the design and implementation of local marketing plan to support a new emphasis on the value of technical education, stackable industry certifications, apprenticeship programs, and career pathway awareness.*
- *Continue production and distribution of Annual Impact Report to partners and the public to highlight community involvement and the services available from the agency.*

Numerous objectives and strategies were developed and implemented by the Board's Operations Committee as noted in the *Local Workforce Development Plan Matrix* below that support the organization's mission, vision, and goals and the implementation of a fully integrated workforce system under the new WIOA law. However, a number of key issues remain and plan to be addressed over the next four (4) years within the various core program areas, integrating as much as possible the services and partnership activities of our workforce system. Although the workforce system in Cameron County was designed to be flexible and responsive to labor market demands, some key issues, challenges, and opportunities exist that will potentially impact economic growth in our region.

**Cameron County Key Issues, Challenges, and Opportunities, FY2017-2020 that will impact our workforce system:**

**Issues:**

- *Alternative Energy*
- *I-69 Transportation Corridor*
- *Increasing Population*
- *Workforce Statistics---Educational Levels, Skills Gap, Soft Skills*
- *Population Statistics---Illiteracy, Poverty, Single Parent Families*
- *Border Violence*
- *Immigration*
- *Public Transportation*
- *Public Housing*
- *Alignment of Educational Programs to Available Jobs*

**Challenges:**

- *Implementation of WIOA Law*
- *2016 National Election Results---Policy/Funding Questions*
- *Workforce Center Facilities Capacity*
- *Co-location of Vocational Rehabilitation Partners*
- *Federal Funding of Workforce Programs*
- *State Funding of Elementary & Secondary Education---CTE programs, Adult Education, and Pre-K are concerns*
- *Returning Veterans Entering the Workforce*
- *Child Care Recruitment*
- *State and Federal Grant Solicitation Capabilities*
- *Local Funding Solicitation Capabilities*

**Opportunities:**

- *New Space X Launch Facility*
- *New SATA Group Machining/Foundry Relocation*
- *New Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Terminals at Port of Brownsville*
- *Deepening of the Port of Brownsville*
- *Co-location of Vocational Rehabilitation Partners*
- *New Bridge to South Padre Island (pending completion of environmental summary)*
- *Renewed Growth of Oil & Gas Industry in Eagle Ford Shale area*
- *Increased Tourism*
- *Rebirth of Texas Southmost College (TSC)*
- *Restructuring of the University of Texas at Brownsville (UTB) to UTRGV*
- *New UTRGV School of Medicine*
- *Option agreement to potentially bring a flat-rolled mini-steel mill and distribution facility to the Port of Brownsville*

Reference Codes assigned to the TWC, TWIC, and WFS Cameron documents referenced throughout this Narrative are as follows:

**TWC-A** = *TWC Strategic Plan 2010-2015*

**TWC-B** = *TWC "Advancing Texas" 2012 Update*

**TWC-C** = *TWC Strategic Plan 2015-2019*

**TWC-D** = *TWC Adult Education and Literacy Strategic Plan for FY2015-2020*

**TWC-E** = *Combined State Plan for WIOA PY2016-2019*

**TWIC-A** = *TWIC System Strategic Plan 2016-2023*

**WFS-A** = *WFS Cameron Board Goals 2013-2018*

**WFS-B** = *WFS Cameron Key Issues, Challenges, & Opportunities 2013-2018*

The Matrix below will illustrate an array of selected objectives, strategies, and evaluation elements from the above source documents, updated and improved, which were deemed by the Board's Operations Committee to be important for inclusion in the new WFS Cameron FY 2017-2020 Local Workforce Development Plan. Subsequent responses to the TWC Board Planning Guidelines questions will include expansions on these initiatives, as appropriate to each question.

**WFS Cameron**

**Local Workforce Development Plan Matrix 2017-2020**

**TWC Strategic Plan 2010-2015: (Ref. Code TWC-A)**

<u>Ref. Code</u>	<u>TWC Objective</u>	<u>Critical Bus. Issue</u>	<u>WFS Cameron Action Plan 2013-2020</u>	<u>Evaluation Elements</u>
TWC-A1	Assessment of Post-secondary credentials vs. job openings forecast.	More effective integration of academic and CTE options at HS and Postsecondary institutions to reduce dropouts. CTE awareness initiative.	PPS Project Curriculum Alignment CTE Emphasis "Pipeline" alignment-- HS CTE to Post-sec program to demand jobs. TSC Strategic Planning Com. LMCI data sharing. BISD/Tech Prep-BEDC Partnership Project STEM Challenge by BWA Consortium. RSTEC, United Brownsville and RGV Focus leadership committee service by ED.	#Cooperative Projects. Increased CTE participation. Increased # ISD's w/Achieve Texas 6-yr Plans. Proven alignment of programs offered to jobs available. In 2-5 yrs.—Develop Matrix of CTC Programs to Demand Occupations. Plus LMCI and JobsEQ data.
TWC-A2	Decrease dropout rates by implementing CTE programs.	(Same)	(Same)	(Same)
TWC-A3	Facilitate dual credit transfer programs from HS to College in "technical" pathways as well as academic courses.	(Same)	(Same)	(Same)
TWC-A4	Increase blind & disabled employment opportunities.	Need for more disabled in employment pool to reduce unemployment.	EARN Conference. Student Disability Navigator will promote Pre-ETS services to students with disabilities. Prof. dev. Training for Contractor staff. MOU w/ VR. "Ticket to Work" EN designation. TVC and VR co-location. Vets Coalition. Vet Summit. United Way VET Program participation.	#participants each yr. (249 in '12) Documentation of training. Outreach efforts w/ VR, etc.
TWC-A5	Increase Veteran employment opportunities.	Need for more Vets in employment pool to reduce unemployment.	"Red, White, & You" Job Fair. Contractor/TVC MOU. Facilitate College Credit for Heroes campaign.	Documentation of participation by Vets and businesses in Vet initiatives.
TWC-A6	Design & implement integrated ABE and workforce skills training for LEP population.	Need to train LEP's for demand occ. job skills so they can attain employment.	Partnership with AEL provider. Expansion of TSTC Harlingen programs. Mango program in Mobile Unit. Parental Involvement activities. TSC compressed CE skill programs.	Documentation of participation. # of SDF and SSB Grants awarded. Number of customers receiving high school equivalency certificate. Number of customers receiving skilled trades certifications.

TWC-A7	Implement targeted ABE programs with "workplace literacy" skills.	(Same as TWC-A6)	Soft Skills Training Program with SHRM endorsement. Financial literacy classes. Job Readiness classes. LMCI training. College awareness classes.	# ABE graduates from supplemental training programs. Number of positive employments. Confirmed positive follow up w/employers.
TWC-A8	CTC's will develop training programs to fill skill gaps in their regions.	Shortage of workers with appropriate middle skills, and mass retirements in wide range of industries.	United Way study. LMCI and JobsEQ analysis. TSC Strategic Plan Com. Collective Impact-- Group #3. SDF & SSB Grants by TSTC and TSC. Study of extent of Baby Boomer retirements across certain industries.	# CTE aligned programs developed at high schools. Number of HS CTE graduates. Number of HS grads entering aligned college program. # of tech graduates from TSTC and TSC. Employer satisfaction survey results.
TWC-A9	Expand Registered Apprenticeship programs	(Same as A8)	CTC & industry participation.	# of programs developed by CTCs (Community & Technical Colleges)
TWC-A10	Develop strategic indicator report to determine competitive position in nation.	Data is required to decide where we stand globally.	TWC Report. Space X Project impact. Deepening of Brownsville Port Channel impact. SATA Group and LNG terminals impact report.	TWC Report.
TWC-A11	Local Boards must align their strategic plans with WIOA Combined State Plan and related initiatives.	Local Boards must meet the needs of their local areas. Front line for offering relevant programs & services.	Employer Surveys. Customer Satisfaction Surveys. Board Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee. Border Workforce Alliance (BWA) Consortium.	2017-2020 Strategic Plan Matrix.
<b>"Advancing Texas" 2012 Update: (Code TWC-B)</b>				
	<b><u>Critical Business Issues</u></b>	<b><u>Critical Success Factors</u></b>	<b><u>WFS CAMERON Long-Term Objectives</u></b>	<b><u>Evaluation Elements</u></b>
TWC-B1	More effective integration of academic and CTE options at HS and Post-sec institutions to reduce dropouts.	Planning initiatives that require partner coordination to ensure alignment. College and Career Readiness. Better career counseling at middle schools. Marketing campaign for technical education pathways.	Assess job openings, and ensure that college programs are available to match that forecast. ED service on TSC Strategic Plan Com. RGV LEAD activities & MOU's. Future CTC and HS Matrixes of TWC-A1.	LMCI and JobsEQ data analysis. TWC Supply & Demand Report.
TWC-B2	CTE awareness initiative.	(Same as TWC-A1)	Advocate for improvement in dropout rates by implementing CTE programs. LMCI Symposiums for High School counselors and CTE Faculty. In-School Youth Advocacy.	# training sessions delivered to ISDs. # programs developed. Decreased dropout rates. TWC-A1 Matrixes.
TWC-B3	Lack of alignment & clarity in education policy and regulations for secondary and	Improve program and initiative alignment to ensure seamless educational and career transitions	Align policies, etc. to facilitate efficient transfer of dual enrollment courses, both technical and academic.	Employer satisfaction survey results. # of tech. graduates.

	postsecondary transitions is limiting efficiency and effectiveness of overall outcomes.	thru coordinated and integrated planning.		# of HS grads entering postsecondary programs. Region One Service Center Involvement. "Workforce Pipeline" Initiative. RGV LEAD MOU's with HS & CTC's.
TWC-B4	Everyone must be part of the critical pool of potential employees, especially targeted and core program populations.	Ensure employment outcomes for workers with disabilities. Ensure employment outcomes for veterans. Ensure employment outcomes for LEP's. Provide workplace literacy for LEP's, adults, dislocated workers, and youth.	Increase employment outcomes for all targeted core populations. Implementation of EN designation under "Ticket to Work" program with the Social Security Administration.	Employment data for each target group. #'s served, by disability category. # of EN participants.
TWC-B5	Increasing shortage of workers with appropriate middle skills created by a skills gap, and future workforce retirements in a wide range of industries and occupations.	Expand and integrate middle-skills training to meet current and future employer demand. Expand the "earn while you learn" model for deployment into middle-skills areas. Install work experience and/or apprenticeship programs.	CTC's will develop programs to address skills gaps in their regions, as identified by local needs assessment or biennial supply-demand report of THECB and TWC. Expand apprenticeship programs. Increased OJT's. Increased internships. STEM Challenge Project with BWA. Research TWC Supply & Demand Report, LMCI data, JobsEQ data, etc. for skill gaps to promote training opportunities.	# new training programs developed. Employer satisfaction survey results. TWC Report.
TWC-B6	Career technical education is perceived by many as a less desirable career option.	Increase awareness and educate counselors to create culture where students and parents better understand the wide range of career and educational choices, including middle-skill careers.	Design and implement demonstration programs targeted to improve perception of CTE career options. Increase OJT's, internships, etc. with businesses. Business & industry speakers at PTA's, CTE classes. ED speeches to civic groups, EDC's, & Chambers of Commerce. Market Technical Education, and Publish "success stories" of CTE and CTC graduates. Continue "Youth Coalition" awareness initiatives.	Increased # HS students on Achieve Texas 6-year plans. # Internship, mentorship, OJT participants. Development of Technical Education Marketing Campaign.
TWC-B7	Data is required to ensure that system initiatives are developed and executed to strategically position Texas in the global workforce marketplace.	Data must be available to benchmark Texas against other states & countries in the most significant and strategic educational, workforce, and market outcomes.	Annually the TWIC Council will produce a data set that allows stakeholders to assess their position relative to key indicators of competitiveness.	TWC Report from TWIC.

TWC-B8	Local Boards must understand and meet the needs of their local communities because they are the system's front line partner in offering relevant programs and services.	Enhance planning and coordination to achieve alignment across workforce system components to meet employer and community needs.	Boards will align with and support the TWC strategic plan.	Strategic Plan Matrix.
TWC-B9	Existing data gap regarding employers' needs and customer satisfaction hinders the ability to assess whether existing programs and services are adequately meeting customer requirements.	Programs and services must be aligned with employer needs.	Employer needs and satisfaction surveys. Partner agencies will use the data to improve programs and services. Customer satisfaction surveys.	Survey results. Review of program alignment between CTC's and High Schools. New HS & CTC matrixes of programs matched to Demand Occ.
<b>TWC Strategic Plan 2015-2019: (Ref. Code TWC-C)</b>				
	<b><u>Priority Goals</u></b>	<b><u>Adopted WFS CAMERON Action Plans</u></b>	<b><u>Benchmarks</u></b>	<b><u>Evaluation Elements</u></b>
TWC-C1	<u>Education: Public Schools</u> To ensure that all students in the public education system acquire the knowledge and skills to be responsible and independent Texans.	Ensure HS graduation with skills necessary to pursue college, postsecondary training, military, or workforce.	% of HS grads enrolled at Texas college or university. # of Pre-K age students served thru Texas Early Ed Model. CTE career exploration course--mandatory. Embedded "Soft Skills" course in HS CTE courses.	CTC enrollment data. CC data showing increased participation. CTE course evaluations.
TWC-C2	<u>Education: Higher Education</u> To prepare individuals for a changing economy and workforce.	Provide affordable, accessible, and quality system of higher education. Further develop and apply application of knowledge through teaching, research, and commercialization.	% of nursing graduates enrolled in nursing graduate level programs. Number of STEM graduates from CTC's.	THECB report. CTC graduates from STEM-related programs.
TWC-C3	<u>Health &amp; Human Services:</u> To promote the health, responsibility, and self-sufficiency of individuals and families.	Making public assistance available, while reducing fraud. Restructuring Medicaid funding and reduce the # of uninsured Texans. Enhance infrastructure necessary to improve health care through better care management and performance Improvement incentives. Continue to create partnerships with local communities, advocacy	Decreased % of Texans receiving TANF cash assistance. Increased % of adult welfare participants in job training who enter employment.	TANF data from TWIST. CTC job placement data. Documentation of contracts, MOU's, agreements, & events.

		groups, and the private and for-profit sectors. Address root causes of social and human service needs to develop self-sufficiency of the customer thru contract standards with not-for-profit organizations. Facilitate the seamless exchange of health information among state agencies.		
TWC-C4	<u>Economic Development:</u> Provide attractive economic climate for current & emerging industries and market Texans as a premier business expansion and tourist destination that fosters economic opportunity, job creation, and capital investment.	Promote favorable business climate and a fair system to fund necessary state services. Addressing transportation needs. Maintain economic competitiveness as a key priority in setting state policy. Developing a well-trained, educated, and productive workforce.	# of employees in targeted industry sectors. # of new small businesses created. # of new non-government, non-farm jobs created. Texas Unemployment Rate. # of Texans receiving job training services.	LMCI data. State Dept. data. LMCI data. LMCI data. data on ITA's, etc. TWIST
TWC-C5	<u>General Government:</u> To provide citizens with greater access to government services while reducing service delivery costs and protecting the fiscal resources for current and future taxpayers.	Support effective, efficient, and accountable state government operations. Ensuring the state's bonds attain the highest possible bond rating. Conservatively managing the state's debt.	Ratio of federal dollars received to federal tax dollars paid. # of state employees per 10,000 population. # of state services accessible by Internet. Total savings from processing and receiving information in electronic formats.	TWC Data. N/A
<b>TWIC System Strategic Plan 2016-2023: (Ref. Code TWIC-A)</b>				
	<b><u>Priority Goals</u></b>	<b><u>Objectives</u></b>	<b><u>WFS CAMERON Adopted Strategies</u></b>	<b><u>Evaluation</u></b>
TWIC-A1	<u>Focus on Employers</u>	Increase business and industry involvement.	*Expand outreach programs to employers to assist veterans to find quality employment. BSU unit will partner with Texas Veterans Commission to plan and implement hiring events with employers and veteran service organizations. *Involve business and industry in Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) review and programs of study.	# of hiring events held. # of positive job placements resulting. Rate of employer satisfaction.  % of revised CTE programs of study reviewed by business/industry.

		Expand licensure and industry certification.	<p>*Utilize LMI data to engage business &amp; industry in the planning and restructuring of Texas Southmost College's new technical programs.</p> <p>*Use third-party, industry-based certifications where relevant as an education or training outcome to connect graduate competencies to job skill requirements.</p>	<p>Type and # of 3<sup>rd</sup> party, industry-based certifications successfully completed by program participants.</p> <p>Certification success rate.</p> <p># of new TSC technical programs developed with industry input.</p>
TWIC-A2	<u>Engage in Partnerships</u>	Expand partnerships with system partners and stakeholders to promote collaboration, joint planning, and enhanced participant outcomes.	<p>*Improve rehabilitation employment outcomes by establishing additional partnerships with secondary and postsecondary entities and employers.</p> <p>*Create greater access and effective services by promoting collaboration and regional planning.</p> <p>*Increase access to, referral between, and outcomes of adult education programs and services.</p> <p>*Establish and leverage regional employer partnerships to benefit ex-offender students pre- and post-release.</p>	<p>% of consumers participating in integrated work-based learning activities.</p> <p>% of individuals co-enrolled in VR and workforce programs.</p> <p>% of individuals co-enrolled in adult education and workforce programs.</p> <p># of successful completers of CTC programs.</p> <p>Employment rate for CTC program completers.</p>
TWIC-A3	<u>Align System Elements</u>	<p>Improve and enhance services, programs, and policies to facilitate effective and efficient transitions.</p> <p>Develop and implement policies and processes to ensure portable and transferrable cred and credentials.</p>	<p>*Develop and implement programs of study in community and technical colleges and align with secondary programs of study.</p> <p>*Enhance transition services for students and youth with disabilities to competitive integrated employment or to postsecondary education and training followed by competitive integrated employment.</p> <p>*Ensure consistent credit transfer based on programs of study and common technical core curriculum.</p> <p>*Expand career and technical education courses to provide additional opportunities for dual credit.</p>	<p>% of CTE students receiving dual credit, enroll in CTC, and receive credit.</p> <p>% of students and youth with disabilities who participated in transition services and moved on to CTC enrollment, and to employment.</p> <p>% of transfer students receiving credit at new CTC.</p> <p>% of students successfully completing CTE dual credit courses.</p>

TWIC-A4	<u>Improve and Integrate Programs</u>	Employ enhanced or alternative program and service delivery methods.	<p>*Identify and implement new, relevant technology and service delivery options to expand program and service outcomes.</p> <p>*Increase competitive integrated employment outcomes by increasing awareness of VR services and better serving underserved populations.</p> <p>*Enhance quality of and increase access to quality child care to support parents in obtaining retaining employment.</p>	<p>% of students using technology for course content delivery.</p> <p>Utilization of LMCI, self-service options, and online PD courses.</p> <p>% of consumers identifying as veterans with disabilities, intellectual disabilities, mental health conditions, autism, and deaf-blindness who subsequently enter competitive integrated employment.</p> <p>% of child care providers as TRS.</p> <p>Entered employment rate of parents receiving CC.</p> <p>Employment retention rate for parents receiving CC.</p>
<b>WFS Cameron Board Goals: (Ref. Code WFS-A)</b>				
	<b>Goal</b> <i>(Re-Set by Board at January 26, 2017 Meeting)</i>	<b>Objectives</b> <i>(Developed by Board Staff, approved by Board)</i>	<b>Strategies</b> <i>(Developed by Board Staff, approved by Board)</i>	<b>Evaluation Elements</b> <i>(Developed by Board Staff, approved by Board)</i>
WFS-A1	Increase the presence and linkages with Employers.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communicate top priorities to stakeholders.</li> <li>2. Develop strategies to provide and support the delivery of services to meet business needs.</li> <li>3. Improve and expand internal and external communication to provide business intelligence to our customers.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ED presentations to all major stakeholders--Chambers, civic org., EDC's, ISD's, business groups, etc.</li> <li>2. Employer Surveys.</li> <li>3. Customer Satisfaction Surveys.</li> <li>4. HWOL data searches.</li> <li># of businesses using our data (Business Intel Report).</li> <li>5. Conduct analysis of labor market and industry data and validate.</li> <li>6. Written BSU strategy plan.</li> <li>7. Develop outreach plan for the provision of services.</li> <li>8. Host industry specific gatherings to identify business needs.</li> <li>9. Invite employers to attend participate in Job Clubs, internships, job shadowing, mentoring, etc.</li> <li>10. Provide staff training to improve quality of application and job postings.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Employer satisfaction ratings from Surveys.</li> <li>2. Customer satisfaction ratings from Surveys.</li> <li>3. Job Postings Filled Rate.</li> <li>4. Improvement of employer performance measures.</li> <li>5. Numbers of presentations to stakeholder groups.</li> </ol>
WFS-A2	Facilitate the preparation of an educated and skilled workforce, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collaborate with ISDs and CTCs to expand career &amp; technical education courses to provide additional opportunities for dual enrollment.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hold LMCI work sessions with ISDs and CTCs to determine skill gap areas.</li> <li>2. Enlist industry specific groups to assist CTCs in skills gap program</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Number of new programs developed.</li> <li>2. Number of students enrolled in these programs.</li> <li>3. Number of industry certifications awarded.</li> <li>4. Number of program graduates.</li> </ol>

		<p>2. Provide free GED classes to out-of-school youth and adults without a high school equivalency certificate.</p> <p>3. Collaborate with VR and DBS to provide services to their customers.</p> <p>4. Collaborate with TSC in offering new skilled trades programs in condensed calendar format—with content and outcomes aligned with 3<sup>rd</sup> party industry based certifications.</p>	<p>development and alignment with industry-recognized certifications.</p> <p>3. Assist with new program marketing campaign development.</p> <p>4. Assist CTCs with TWC, DOL, and DOE grant applications for new program startup.</p>	<p>5. Number of graduates hired in field for which trained.</p> <p>6. Number and value of grants awarded.</p>
WFS-A3	Attain exceptional performance against all Texas Workforce Commission accountability performance measures.	<p>(Note: TWC has not yet issued final performance measures with Board targets, but planned initiatives for attainment of whatever goals are set are included herein.)</p> <p>1. Coordinate staff and contractor training on new measures.</p> <p>2. Closely monitor contractor performance on measures attainment at highest level.</p>	1. Attainment of MP+ on at least 90% of performance measures.	1. Monthly TWC MPR Reports
WFS-A4	Improve the quality of workforce services to Employers and Job Seekers.	<p>1. Improve customer service training to Board and Contractor staff.</p> <p>2. Increase quality performance measures of training providers.</p> <p>3. Develop results-driven monitoring plan for providers and staff functions.</p>	<p>1. Conduct Employer and Customer Satisfaction Surveys on regular basis.</p> <p>2. Provide professional development for staff.</p> <p>3. Research and implement results-driven systems approach to performance evaluations.</p>	<p>1. Survey Results.</p> <p>2. Professional development seminar attendance.</p> <p>3. Analysis of performance evaluations.</p>
WFS-A5	Ensure accountability and transparency in all matters and actions.	<p>1. Ensure accountability measures as part of personnel evaluation process.</p> <p>2. Ensure compliance with Board, state, and federal rules regarding postings of meetings, RFPs, minutes, etc.</p> <p>3. Ensure full disclosure of all financial and operational matters through Board committees.</p>	<p>1. Post all meetings with full agenda item descriptions in accordance with the law and Board policies.</p> <p>2. Provide easy access to all stakeholders of all meeting minutes and other open records as requested.</p> <p>3. Establish culture of staff accountability and transparency in all operations through staff meeting discussions and written procedures and policies.</p>	<p>1. Documentation of meeting postings.</p> <p>2. Posting of Board and Committee Minutes.</p> <p>3. Evidence of accountability and transparency culture in staff meetings and reports to Committees, Board, and state and federal agencies.</p> <p>4. Documentation of accountability and transparency requirements in policy and procedure manuals.</p>

WFS-A6	Increase presence and image while building community relationships.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Board administrative staff will become involved in public service organization participation and collaboration to the extent possible with resources.</li> <li>2. ED will prepare and deliver agency mission and message to stakeholder civic organizations across the County.</li> <li>3. Develop outreach marketing plan advertising WFS Cameron customer services to the extent possible with financial resources, using both traditional and social media mediums</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage staff membership in civic organizations.</li> <li>2. Encourage participation/collaboration/support of civic organization projects and initiatives.</li> <li>3. Develop outreach plan for agency services to solicit maximum customer access and use of services within budget limitations.</li> <li>4. Create Community Outreach Committee to promote Board members as "ambassadors" of WFS Cameron Mission.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. # staff memberships in civic organizations.</li> <li>2. Documentation of participation in civic agency events.</li> <li>3. Outreach marketing plan developed and funded to extent possible.</li> <li>4. Social media tracking reports.</li> <li>5. Evidence of aggressive outreach and awareness campaign with area school districts regarding programs, services, collaborative funding arrangements, grants, and tracking.</li> </ol>
<b>KEY ISSUES, CHALLENGES, &amp; OPPORTUNITIES FOR 2013-2018: (Board Strategic Planning Mtg., Oct. 27, 2012)</b>				
<b>KEY ISSUES: (Ref. Code WFS-B)</b>				
		<b>Description</b>	<b>Adopted Action Plans</b>	<b>Evaluation Elements</b>
WFS-B1	Alternative Energy	Wind and solar energy production are a comparative advantage in our region, and a viable career pathway for jobs.	Support TSTC Harlingen & TSC energy programs through ITAs and support services. Encourage CTE energy program development at high school level.	Number of alternative energy graduates. Job placement rates of graduates.
WFS-B2	I-69 Transportation Corridor	The proposed I-69 highway corridor further linking the Valley to state and national markets is a potential boon to the logistics and transportation industry of the region.	Support public efforts to keep the I-69 corridor issue funded. Support development of logistics and transportation postsecondary degree programs at local colleges and universities.	Progress of I-69 corridor highway construction. Documentation of new degree offerings in logistics industry.
WFS-B3	Increasing Population	State demographers estimate the Cameron County population growth to be about 2% annually, but for the future that growth rate will not be sustained. Population is projected to be primarily Hispanic, with historically comparative low educational and skill levels.	Continue promotion of ESL/GED training, high school completion projects, and CTE training programs within our educational system. Continue to offer high quality training and support services to customers in need to the extent of financial resources.	High School completions data. CTC's graduate completion data. LMCI and JobsEQ data analysis.

WFS-B4	Workforce Statistics: Educational levels, Skills Gap, Soft Skills, etc.	The quality of our workforce as judged by HS completion, level of postsecondary education, and industry quality job readiness is a continuing concern, and must be improved in order to keep and attract businesses and jobs in our region. We are a health sector and services sector economy, and need to prepare future generations in STEM related careers that will attract manufacturing jobs to the area.	(See TWC-A and TWC-B objectives and action plans of this document to address these issues.)	(See TWC-A and TWC-B evaluation tools of this document to address these issues.)
WFS-B5	Population Statistics: Illiteracy, Poverty, Single Parent Families, etc.	High levels of illiteracy (37%), poverty (35%), percentage of single parent family units (20%), and low educational levels (13% Bachelors) of our Cameron County workforce are continuing concerns to both our educational institutions and our Workforce Board. Without an educated and trained workforce, the County cannot keep and attract sustainable wage jobs for our growing population.	(See TWC-A, TWC-B, and TWC-C objectives and action plans of this document to address these issues.)	(See TWC-A, TWC-B, and TWC-C evaluation tools of this document to address these issues.)
WFS-B6	Border Violence	Concern exists of the spill-over of violence to the US Border communities as a result of violent competitive activities for drug and human trafficking business of the competing Mexican cartels. Realistic and perceptive information regarding this violence will negatively affect our ability to attract and keep businesses in our area and have a negative impact on the quality of life of our population.	Continue to support educational efforts at high school level to avert students from the influence and lure of a criminal career. Continue to support community quality of life efforts.	Increased # of high school graduates. Lowering of the dropout rates. Increased Parental Involvement projects. Increased Pre-K programs and services.

WFS-B7	Public Transportation	Our County's poor population has a major access problem concerning public transportation. Without reliable and accessible transportation for both children and adults to attend school, attend work, look for work, or access needed social services, they may opt out of the activities that will improve their quality of life.	Continue support of Valley Metro Route 45 which connects UTRGV in Edinburg, through rural communities south and east, to the TSC & UTRGV campuses in Brownsville. Continue support services to customers in need of transportation assistance. Continue participation in the Regional Transportation Advisory Panel (RTAP)	Ridership data of Valley Metro Route 45. Analysis of transportation support service payments. Participate in the RTAP regional planning committee.
WFS-B8	Public Housing	As with transportation, the availability of affordable, quality built public housing for our poor population is a social issue of concern, leading to the growth of substandard housing colonias and an increased homeless population.	Continue to collaborate with the Equal Voice Network, and other public housing authorities and agencies to promote state, federal, and/or grant funding for energy efficient public housing.	# of Cameron County public housing units added annually. Documentation of training for HUD Section 3 participants.
WFS-B9	Alignment of Educational Programs to Available Jobs	(See TWC-A1-3 & TWC-B5)	(See TWC-A1-3 & TWC-B5)	(See TWC-A1-3 & TWC-B5)
<b>CHALLENGES: (Ref. Code WFS-C)</b>				
WFS-C1	Child Care Recruitment	WFS Cameron experienced a decrease in the number of child care customers with changes in the 2016 new program rules.	Increase CC outreach efforts at Contractor level. Consider policy adjustment of parent cost charges. Consider policy adjustment of OAG requirements for claimants. Consider policy adjustment to annual recertification of customers.	Documentation on MPR of meeting or exceeding minimum 95% customer units performance measure annually.
WFS-C2	2016 National Election Results	Constant concern exists over federal policy changes that could impact our WIOA funding and regulations.	Monitor and implement any legislative guidelines impacting workforce and/or economic development.	Monitoring of WIOA implementation guidelines.
WFS-C3	New trade opportunities and capacity for new jobs via Brownsville ship channel.	Cameron County boasts a deep water Port of Brownsville, which makes us a potential hub for logistics and transportation of raw materials. With the widening of the Panama Canal, forward thought to deepening and widening our Port channel would	Continue to support regional efforts to deepen and widen the Brownsville Ship Channel and improve Port facilities to accommodate new trade and new industry opportunities and build the capacity for new jobs.	Monitoring of progress on Channel Project.

		potentially attract new business opportunity for our region.		
WFS-C4	Workforce Center Facilities Capacity	WFS Cameron currently services approximately 170,000 customers in its two major locations in Harlingen and Brownsville. As economic conditions deteriorate and as population in the workforce grows, there is concern that increased facilities will be needed to service the demands of our eligible customers.	Continue to monitor caseloads and customer demand at all centers. Begin research on potential additional sites for expansion of facilities. Begin planning activities for potential budget funding of additional facilities.	Customer traffic counts. Case worker load analysis. LMCI data analysis.
WFS-C5	WIOA Colocation requirements of VR and DBS to our workforce centers.	Collaborate with TWC, VR, and DBS officials on plan of action to assimilate these operations, and the appropriate timeline for accomplishment.	Research plan to relocate Board staff offices to external location to make room for VR and DBS in the centers. Collaborate with Contractor to determine construction/demolition needs. Perform demolition/construction as necessary.	Successful colocation of VR and DBS to workforce centers. TVC and TVLP programs are already collocated in Cameron workforce centers.
WFS-C6	Federal Funding of Workforce Programs	Funding decreases, coupled with increased demand for services to a growing, needy workforce, is a constant concern of the Board and WFS Cameron administration.	Engage Board committees in discussion of alternatives and priorities related to declining federal funding. Perform LMCI and TWIST data analysis to better target primary customer needs. Prepare alternative budget scenarios for future years considering analysis of data. Continue to work with legislators and local, state, and federal officials on alternative funding sources. Continue to pursue foundation grant sources of funding to leverage federal funding.	Annual WIOA funding allocations. Documentation of Board Work Groups and Committee discussions related to funding alternatives and priorities. State and federal grants obtained. Foundation grant awards secured.

WFS-C7	State Funding of Elementary & Secondary Education--CTE programs, Adult Education, and Pre-K concerns	Education and training are the foundation of a high quality and attractive workforce. WFS Cameron is concerned that the current product of our school systems is not appropriate for our workforce conditions. There needs to be better Pre-K development of our children, more and better technical education programs, and more adult education programs to bring our poorly educated and untrained workforce up to a level that will attract new economic development for our region and create jobs for our growing workforce.	Continue to support local colleges and universities in the development of STEM-related certificates and degrees. Continue funding and support of Pre-K and kindergarten programs and professional development of CTE teachers and staff. Continue to participate and collaborate in CTE-related programs with schools and other related agencies. Continue to collaborate with school systems on dropout recovery programs, industry internships, mentoring, OJT's, and apprenticeship programs. Continue to collaborate with school systems and LRGV LEAD on implementation of Achieve Texas 6-year degree plans and increased CTE program options in the high schools. Continue to lobby for increased, directed CTE funding for high schools, and for full-day Pre-K and kindergarten funding.	Documentation of match between technical programs available and jobs available. Number of high schools increasing the number of CTE programs within their curriculum options. Number of CTE program graduates from HS. Number of college STEM-related program graduates each year. Job placement rates of technical college graduates. Decreasing dropout rate. Increased state funding for elementary Pre-K and secondary education.
WFS-C8	Returning Veterans Entering the Workforce	The Valley has an inordinate amount of veterans returning from military service. It is imperative that we provide them with the training and opportunity to secure quality employment in our workforce.	Veterans Job Fairs. Outreach for industry support of internships, scholarships, OJT's, and other aids to veterans. Specialized veterans training programs in job readiness and soft skills. Priority casework and job placement services for veterans.	# of veterans served by WFS Cameron in various programs/projects. # of veterans trained with ITA's. # of veterans placed in employment. Job retention statistics for veterans placed in employment. # of Veterans Job Fairs conducted, and numbers of veterans participating.
WFS-C9	State and Federal Grant Solicitation Capabilities	Supplemental funding sources from the State and Federal Governments is a requirement to leverage dwindling WIOA funding, and to provide for priority projects not fundable through WIOA guidelines but considered necessary to build a better workforce for Cameron County.	Research local and foundation grant funding sources and pursue grants in appropriate areas where resources allow.	# of grants filed. # of grants awarded. \$ value of grants awarded.

WFS-C10	Local Funding Solicitation Capabilities	Supplemental funding sources from local or foundation sources is a requirement to leverage dwindling WIOA funding, and to provide for priority projects not fundable through WIOA guidelines but considered necessary to build a better workforce for Cameron County.	Research state and federal grant funding sources and pursue grants in appropriate areas where resources allow.	# of local or foundation grants filed. # of grants awarded. \$ value of grants awarded.
<b>OPPORTUNITIES: (Code WFS-D)</b>				
WFS-D1	New Space X Rocket Launch Facility	Space X, a private space rocket launch corporation, has laid the foundation to build a new launch facility in Brownsville. Brownville EDC and the community have been courting the corporation to locate here for the past 2 years, and built an attractive incentive package to bring them to our area. This company has the potential to help Brownville and the Valley attain a new economic development comparative advantage for our region by adding 600 new high paying jobs in our area and setting the stage for a full-blown aerospace industry development around their launch facility. It would also incentivize STEM-related educational programs within our schools, colleges, and universities, thereby significantly improving the quality of our workforce in the future for aerospace and all kinds of spin-off support industries.	Support state TWC incentive funding from SDF and Technology Fund sources. Support workforce training program development at TSTC and TSC and UTB for the type of workers and technicians needed by Space X should they actually build the proposed launch facility here. Join the EDC's Chambers, County & City Governments, and other stakeholders in the public support of this new industry to our area.	Board and Executive Director public support presentations. Supply LMCI data to facilitate workforce capacity and potential.

WFS-D2	New SATA Group Machining/Foundry Relocation	This precision machining operation has added a U.S. location in Brownsville and begun startup operations, installing very high tech, expensive CNC machines, and is working with WFS Cameron, TSTC, TSC, and the BEDC on funding and workforce issues. They will be producing parts for Caterpillar and John Deere, for sale and delivery to Mexican and other customers. Hiring is likely to exceed 150 within three years, most of whom will be CNC Operators and Machinists.	Collaborate with CTCs and EDCs to assist in development of required training programs. Collaborate with CTCs and EDCs on funding possibilities for SATA training needs.	Federal &/or state funding attained. New programs of study developed.
WFS-D3	New Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Terminals at the Port of Brownsville	Two of three LNG corporations are in the process of awaiting the Final Environmental Impact Statement and the Federal Authorization Decision by midsummer 2019. FERC applications to build LNG pipelines and LNG export terminals at the Port of Brownsville are under consideration. Construction workers to build even one site would be over 6,000 jobs, which would severely strain the current workforce. WFS Cameron is working with local CTCs and EDCs to develop and/or expand existing skilled trades programs in order to be able to produce the workers needed from local talent.	Research skilled trades occupations to determine skill gaps. Work with colleges to either expand or create programs of study in condensed format to fill those identified gaps in the workforce, preferably in NCCER-certified programs.	Number of participants trained. Number of participants NCCER-certified. Number of participants hired in field for which trained.
WFS-D4	New Bridge to South Padre Island	Cameron County has secured authority and funding to build a second Causeway Bridge from the Port Isabel mainland across the Laguna Madre Bay to South	Publicly support the new bridge proposal. Be proactive in assisting construction and support industry firms in finding and hiring employees.	Numbers of jobs filled for the project.

		Padre Island (pending completion of environmental summary). This construction will provide new jobs to the area, new infrastructure for the Island development, and will promote increased tourism and economic investment in the area. The demand for construction workers for this project and the LNG projects will severely strain the capacity of our workforce supply.		
WFS-D5	Growth of Oil & Gas Industry	The close proximity of the Eagle Ford Shale oil and gas exploration project gives our area residents an opportunity to participate in vying for the good paying jobs available in the Laredo to Corpus area of our state if they are willing to relocate temporarily.	Publicly promote the availability of construction, welding, CDL drivers, and other technician jobs available in the Eagle Ford region. Support training for Cameron County residents who wish to avail themselves of those jobs.	Number of Cameron County residents taking positions in Eagle Ford Shale area.
WFS-D6	Increased Tourism	Both the potential of Space X launches in the region, the facility itself, plus the alluring aspects of our beach and bird watching potential could increase tourism in our region.	Proactively work through BSU unit to identify employer needs in the tourism industry and work with local CTC's to satisfy that demand through new program offerings	Increase in tourism jobs recorded in WIT and TWIST. LMCI data.
WFS-D7	Rebirth of Texas Southmost College (TSC)	The recent breakup of the 20-year partnership between Texas Southmost College and the Univ. of Texas at Brownsville provides an opportunity for WFS CAMERON to work closely with TSC officials in aligning their program development to match the primary careers of our economy and to build a new STEM-related workforce to attract new economic development to the region.	Serve on TSC Strategic Planning Committee. Participate in fostering community and County-wide meetings to plan for the future of TSC. Assist TSC with Job Fairs to identify potential adjunct faculty for their programs. Work with other civic groups to encourage participation in solving the myriad of new developmental programs and service departments, etc. to be needed by TSC by 2015.	Number of TSC graduates. TSC graduate placement rates. Number of new TSC technical programs developed or redeveloped. Enrollment data for TSC.

WFS-D8	Restructuring of the University of Texas at Brownsville (UTB) to UTRGV	As TSC redevelops itself as a free-standing, full service community college, so does UTRGV need to make infrastructural and programmatic changes to redesign itself as the UT System university representative for our region. This creates an opportunity for WFS Cameron to contribute the LMCI data and other assistance that will help UTRGV plan its upper division course structure for the future; Growth in the Physics and Astronomy Departments has spawned a research facility that has attracted high profile interest nationwide.	Serve on UTRGV Strategic Planning Committee. Participate in fostering community and County-wide meetings to plan for the future of UTRGV. Assist UTRGV with Job Fairs to identify potential adjunct and fulltime faculty for their programs. Work with other civic groups to encourage participation in solving the myriad of new developmental programs and service departments, etc. to be needed by UTRGV by 2015. Highlight results of Department Research Projects.	Number of UTRGV graduates. UTRGV graduate placement rates. Number of new UTRGV STEM-related programs developed or redeveloped. Enrollment data for TSC.
WFS-D9	New UT Medical School	Part of the recent legislation creating UTRGV also created the new UTRGV School of Medicine in the Valley. Some of the groundwork was laid through the RACH facility in Harlingen and Edinburg. The health industry will expand at an even greater rate than we see currently, and will bring new jobs and new career opportunities to our citizenry, as well as improve the quality of life for our residents while increasing access to free indigent health care.	Work with county and state legislators in the planning phase of this project. Develop long-range plan for work with CTC's and UTRGV to plan for development of new curriculum options to satisfy expected demand of new career options in the medical field as a result of having a Medical School in our region. Proactively support the project and supply critical LMCI data to planners so they can make sound decisions relative to the project.	Long-term evidence of new health-related programs entering the curricular offerings of CTC's and the University. Establishment of Scholarships to benefit UTRGV School of Medicine students The opening of Area Health Education Centers that offer free healthcare to residents and educational opportunities for UTRGV health occupations students

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

**Board Response:**

<b>Core Program Partnership Strategies to Achieve Vision and Goals</b>			
<b>Core Program</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Partner Agencies</b>	<b>Activities/Strategies</b>
<b>WIOA Adults</b>	Board & Contractor	TVC, TVLP, Voc. Rehab (General & Blind), TWC-ES, TSTC, TSC, Career Schools	<p>Coordinate with partners to identify and assess qualified individuals in need of WIOA services. In addition to WIOA career &amp; training services and support services, WFS Cameron also offers job readiness and soft skills workshops, and workforce readiness certifications.</p> <p>Work with partners on referrals to appropriate agency for needed services.</p>
<b>WIOA Dislocated Workers</b>	Board & Contractor	TVC, TVLP, TWC-ES, Vocational Rehab (General & Blind), TSTC, TSC, Career Schools	<p>Coordinate with partners to identify and assess qualified individuals in need of WIOA services. In addition to WIOA career &amp; training services and support services, WFS Cameron also offers job readiness and soft skills workshops, and workforce readiness certifications.</p> <p>Work with partners on referrals to appropriate agency for needed services.</p>
<b>WIOA Youth In-School</b>	Board & Contractor	ISDs, Communities in Schools, Vocational Rehab (General & Blind Services)	<p>Coordinate with partners to identify and assess qualified individuals in need of WIOA services. In addition to WIOA career &amp; training services and support services, WFS Cameron also offers job readiness and soft skills workshops, and workforce readiness certifications.</p> <p>Work with partners on referrals to appropriate agency for needed services.</p>
<b>WIOA Youth Out-of-School</b>	Board & Contractor	ISDs, Communities in Schools, Juvenile Justice, Literacy Centers, Vocational Rehab (General & Blind Services), TSTC, TSC, Career Schools	<p>Coordinate with partners to identify and assess qualified individuals in need of WIOA services. In addition to WIOA career &amp; training services and support services, WFS Cameron also offers job readiness and soft skills workshops, and workforce readiness certifications.</p> <p>Work with partners on referrals to appropriate agency for needed services.</p>
<b>TWC Vocational Rehabilitation</b>	Board & Contractor	ISDs, TVC, TVLP, MHMR, TSTC, TSC, Career Schools	<p>Coordinate with partners to identify and assess qualified individuals in need of WIOA services. In addition to WIOA career &amp; training services and support services, WFS Cameron also offers job readiness and soft skills workshops, and workforce readiness certifications.</p> <p>Student HireAbility Navigator will work with VR to assist students with disabilities learn about Pre-ETS services such as work experience and employment programs.</p> <p>Work with partners on referrals to appropriate agency for needed services.</p>

			Leadership groups for planning, coordination, and colocation activities.
<b>TWC Adult Education &amp; Literacy (AEL)</b>	Board & Contractor	ISDs, TVC, TVLP, TWC-ES, Communities in Schools, Juvenile Justice, Literacy Centers	<p>Coordinate with partners to identify and assess qualified individuals in need of WIOA services. In addition to WIOA career &amp; training services and support services, WFS Cameron also offers job readiness and soft skills workshops, and workforce readiness certifications.</p> <p>Work with partners on referrals to appropriate agency for needed services.</p> <p>Workforce services provided: soft skills, financial literacy, LMCI training, job readiness, career and college awareness.</p> <p>Reverse referral of candidates.</p>
<b>Wagner-Peyser Program (ES staff)</b>	Board & Contractor	TVC, TVLP, TWC-ES, Vocational Rehab (General & Blind Services), ISDs, Communities in Schools, Juvenile Justice, TSTC, TSC, Career Schools	<p>Coordinate with partners to identify and assess qualified individuals in need of WIOA services. In addition to WIOA career &amp; training services and support services, WFS Cameron also offers job readiness and soft skills workshops, and workforce readiness certifications.</p> <p>Work with partners on referrals to appropriate agency for needed services.</p>

Within the WFS Cameron workforce system’s Texas Model design, the contractor manages and operates the region’s Workforce Centers and has contracted responsibility for operating the WIOA (Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth) programs, providing day-to-day guidance to TWC Wagner-Peyser staff, and execution of One-Stop Programs. WFS Cameron Workforce Centers has been fully integrated with the co-location of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services. TWC maintains administrative responsibility, but shares responsibility for directing daily work assignments, assigning individual performance goals, coordinating hiring, initiating disciplinary action and evaluating ES staff performance. The contractor is likewise responsible for providing direction to Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) staff, in coordination with TVC administration, as well as the Texas Veterans Leadership Program (TVLP).

WFS Board staff is charged with the coordination and collaboration of the local Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) contractor for WFS Cameron, which is the Brownsville Independent School District (BISD). Board and contractor staff work closely with BISD to coordinate and provide workforce services to AEL participants. These services include classes in soft skills, financial literacy, job readiness, LMCI training, and career and college readiness.

With the restructuring of the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) and Division of Blind Services (DBS) under the TWC umbrella (now known as Vocational Rehabilitation Services or VR), the WFS Cameron Board has been charged with coordination with VR to leverage the full breadth of resources provided to the WFS Cameron region. WFS Cameron staff responded to TWC guidance regarding coordination of activities with these entities and actively engaged their departmental counterparts to form leadership groups to work on strategic planning, business engagement, and facility colocation to efficiently coordinate operations..

AEL, VR Services, and WFS Cameron Workforce Center contractors are provided guidance and strategies regarding alignment and leveraging of resources, and are responsible for integration of services across the Board area, while WFS Cameron Board staff is responsible for management, oversight, internal and external monitoring, and reporting, to ensure effective execution. Strong management, oversight, and monitoring by the WFS Cameron Board and Board staff ensure resources are deployed consistent with the WFS Cameron vision and achieve the goals outlined within this plan.

## Economic and Workforce Analysis

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

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

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

### **Board Response:**

The overall economic conditions in Cameron County have improved significantly in the past few years, offering employment opportunities for varying occupations and skill levels to local job seekers. The growth in the economy can be observed by the increase in the number of establishments, average employment, average weekly wages, and total wages as reported by TWC's Quarterly Employment and Wages (QCEW). A slight dip in number of establishments, as well as average employment has taken place in the first two quarters of this year compared to last year; however average weekly wages and total wages were significantly higher and, the employment outlook looks promising in the upcoming year. This slight dip in the average employment may have been the result of the lower number of establishments for the region. According to TWC's QCEW, the total number of establishments declined by 0.2456% from a total of 6,529 establishments for the first two quarters of 2017 to a total of 6,513 establishments in 2018. Although the average employment also declined by 0.2298%, the impact of these new establishments can be seen in the rise of the average weekly wage and employment for the same time frame, an increase of 3.4%. Average weekly wages grew by 10.8% from \$573 in 2013 to \$635 in 2018. A total of 7,435 new jobs were added, from 131,007 in 2013 to 138,442 in 2018. The total purchasing power also grew as a result of the total wage increase, from \$976,195,307 to \$1,141,730,492.

**Table A1: Economic Indicators**

Year	Quarters	Establishments	Average Employment	Avg Weekly Wages	Total Wages
2018	Q1 & Q2	6513	138,442	635	1,141,730,492
2017	Q1 & Q2	6529	138,761	614	1,108,004,535
2016	Q1 & Q2	6,495	137,959	596	1,069,227,520
2015	Q1 & Q2	6,432	136,387	609	1,079,909,982
2014	Q1 & Q2	6,379	133,882	583	1,013,738,196
2013	Q1 & Q2	6,353	131,007	573	976,195,307

Source: TWC's QCEW

According to TWC's Industry Projections shown in Table A2, the total number of individuals employed in Cameron County is projected to grow by 28,472 new jobs in 2026. The area had a total of 141,968 individuals employed in 2016, and is projected to grow to 170,440, a 20.1% percentage growth.

The healthcare and social service cluster continues to drive the economy and position itself as the leading industry in the area. The healthcare and social service sector in 2016 had 37,883 jobs, and is projected to be

the largest employer, with 11,022 new positions added by 2026. At the tail end of the industry projections, the Information Sector is projected to have the lowest number of positions created by 2026.

Health Care & Social Assistance, Educational Services, Retail Trade, and Accommodation & Food Service are projected to be the four largest industry clusters, creating a total of 20,540 positions in Cameron County by 2026. Other key industry sectors such as Government, Manufacturing, Manufacturing, Transportation and Warehousing, and Construction are also projected to grow at a strong rate. See Table A2.

**Table A2: Demand Industry Sectors**

Industry Code	Industry Title	Annual Average Employment 2016	Annual Average Employment 2026	Number Change 2016-026	Percent Growth 2016-2026
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	37,883	48,905	11,022	29.1%
61	Educational Services, Public and Private	20,702	23,378	2,676	12.9%
44-45	Retail Trade	18,388	21,300	3,350	18.7%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	13,837	17,329	3,492	25.2%
999	Government, Except Postal Services, State, and Local Education and Hospitals	10,815	12,073	1,258	11.6%
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	8,741	10,763	2,022	23.1%
31-33	Manufacturing	5,438	5,545	107	1.97%
48-49	Transportation and Warehousing	4,556	5,323	767	16.8%
52	Finance and Insurance	3,348	3,758	410	12.2%
42	Wholesale Trade	3,304	3,515	211	6.38%
81	Other Services (except Public Administration)	3,233	3,379	146	4.52%
23	Construction	2,932	3,575	643	21.9%
54	Professional and Technical Services	2,353	2,656	303	12.9%
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1,676	1,834	158	9.4%
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	1,125	1,220	95	8.4%
51	Information	1,107	966	-41	-4.07%
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	420	568	148	35.2%
22	Utilities	293	338	45	15.4%

Source: TWC Tracer2

Table A3 below illustrates the type of demand occupations that are found in these demand industry groups. Some of these demand occupations are being targeted by the board due to the large number of projected job opening and growth rate.

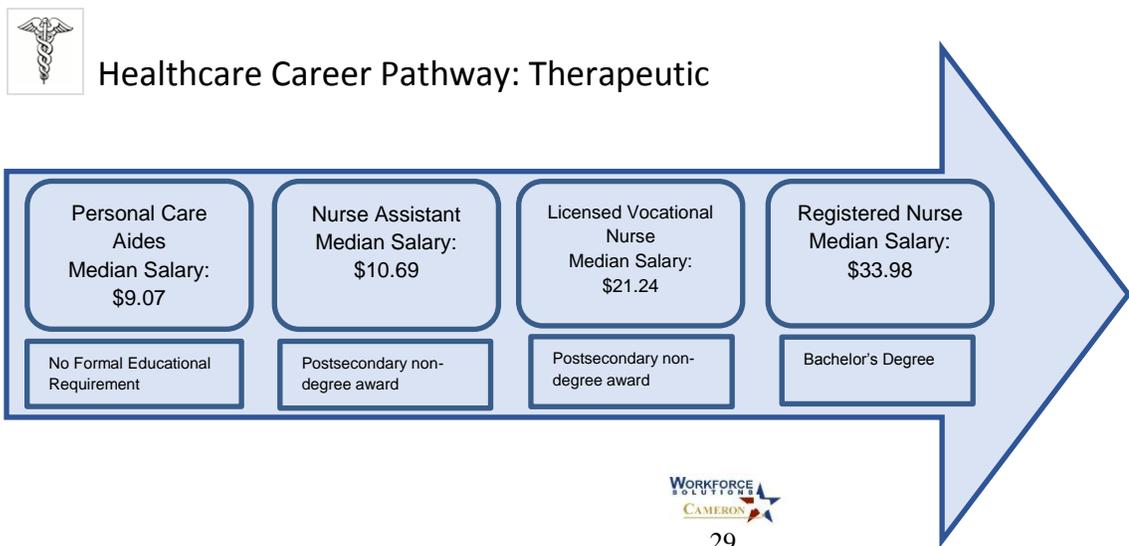
**Table A3: Demand Occupations in Industry Groups**

Industry	Projected Job Growth	Strong Occupational Targets for Career Pathways
<b>Health Care &amp; Social Assistance</b>	11,022	1.Nurse Assistant 2. Personal Care Aides 3. Home Health Aides 4. Registered Nurses 5. Licensed Vocational Nurses
<b>Educational Services, Public &amp; Private</b>	2,676	1.Teacher Assistants 2. Substitute Teachers 3. Elementary School Teachers 4. Secondary School Teachers 5. Middle School Teachers
<b>Retail Trade</b>	3,350	1.Retail Salesperson 2. Cashier 3. Customer Service Representatives 4. General & Operations Manager 5. Stock Clerks & Order Fillers 6. First line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers
<b>Accommodation &amp; Food Services</b>	3,492	1.Cooks, Restaurant 2. General & Operations Manager 3. First Line Supervisor
<b>Administrative &amp; Waste Services</b>	2,022	1.Secretaries & Administrative Assistant, Ex Legal, Medical/Executive 2. Office Clerks, General
<b>Manufacturing</b>	107	1.Maintenance & Repair Workers 2. General & Operations Manager 3. Human Resource Specialist 4. Structural Metal Fabricators & Fitters
<b>Construction</b>	643	1.Accountant and Auditors 2. Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks 3. Electricians 4. Plumbers 5. Industrial Truck & Tractor Operators 6. Labor & Freight, Stock, & Material Movers

Source: TWC Tracer2

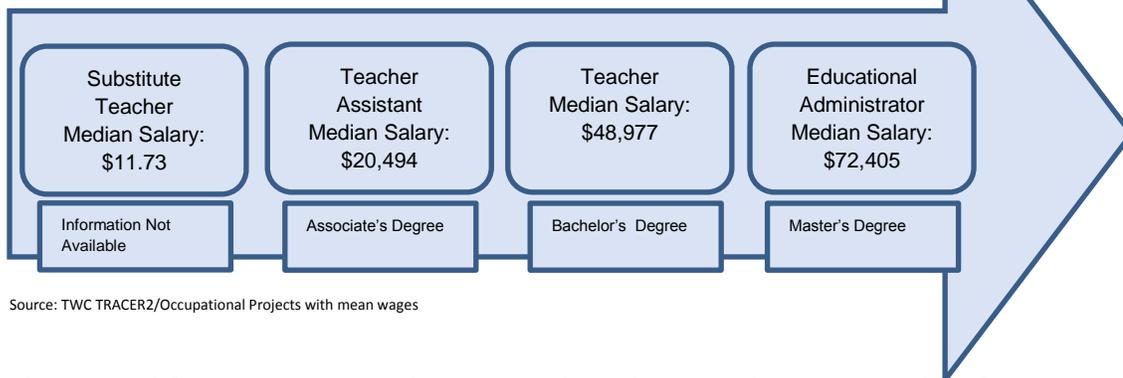
As noted in Table A2, healthcare and social service industry group is the leading industries in the area. There are a number of in-demand occupations that provide opportunities for upward mobility through career pathways. Some of the fastest growing occupations that are both targeted and in-demand include medical secretaries, medical assistant and nurse assistant. As previously noted, this industry is projected to add 11,022 positions by 2026.

The following are career pathway models that may be used during program orientations to illustrate career opportunities available through training in targeted occupations with training providers.





## Educational Career Pathway



Source: TWC TRACER2/Occupational Projects with mean wages

The second fastest growing industry noted is Educational Services, Public & Private. There are ten secondary districts in Cameron County alone. The City of Brownsville has the largest school district (Brownsville Independent School District) in the entire Rio Grande Valley, with student enrollment close to 50,000. It is also one of the largest employers in the county. Some of the demand occupations that are also part of the Board's targeted occupations include teacher assistants, elementary school teachers, middle school teachers, and secondary school teachers. Other occupations in this industry that have been experiencing high demand include substitute teachers, educational administrators, educational guidance counselors, and preschool teachers. Entry level occupations such as teacher assistants and support occupations provide upward mobility that leads to career pathway within this industry group.

Manufacturing and Construction are other industry groups that provide many opportunities for entry level employment leading to upward mobility. Some of the in-demand occupations that are also being targeted by the board include electrician, plumbers, maintenance & repair workers, general & operations manager, and structural metal fabricators & fitters.

### Economic Development Alignment:

WFS Cameron has targeted a number of demand industry groups that significantly impact our economy. These industry groups are strongly aligned with partner initiatives and recruitment efforts throughout Cameron County. These stakeholders have had a long history of collaborative planning on existing and emerging industry sectors and occupations. Economic development initiatives undertaken by local EDCs in the region support the expansion of existing industries and the development of new ones. For example, the Brownsville Economic Development Council secured a commitment from an Italian manufacturing company that established their manufacturing plant in Brownsville, Texas. The company is expected to create around 2,500 construction positions and employ from 56 to 115 skilled worker positions during different phases of the construction. In Table A2, the manufacturing industry is positioned in 8<sup>th</sup> place with a current workforce of 5,438. This sector is projected to grow 2.0%, but its growth will be significantly higher due to the arrival of this company. Some of the positions available are high technology, high skill/ high wage jobs. In the past, Cameron County had a high concentration of low skill manufacturing jobs revolving around the garment industry. Advancements in technology have driven the low skilled plants to other countries and have enabled Cameron County to position itself as a contender for advanced manufacturing plants.

Other workforce partners such as school districts have been promoting career pathways for a number of years in support of TEA's Achieve Texas initiative. Some career pathways such as healthcare prepare students to obtain licensure and certification to secure entry level employment upon graduation. WFS Cameron has also

been partnering with RGV Lead, a local non-profit, to promote demand industries and occupations as well as identify training programs in the areas that support these occupations. RGV Lead’s mission is to link economic and academic development through educational and business partnerships. An annual Regional Labor Market Information Report was created by RGV Lead and is continuously updated through a collaborative effort from key stakeholders including but not limited to EDC, Chambers of Commerce, Businesses, and Workforce Development Boards. This final report is shared with key stakeholders so that they may present the information to guide youth in their selection of a career pathway.

*2. A list of the in-demand industry sectors and occupations.*

**Board Response:**

WFS Cameron identified the high demand occupations noted in Table A4. There are a number of demand occupations that provide opportunity for career pathways. Three of the top 5 occupations with the most job openings do not require a formal educational credential and support the healthcare and retail trade industry groups. Collectively, they are projected to create 13,290 openings within the next 10 years. Other high demand occupations that support in-demand industry groups include elementary school teachers, secondary school teachers, teacher assistants, registered nurses, nurse assistants and middle school teachers.

**Table A4: Demand Occupations**

Occ Code	Occupational Title	Annual Average Employment 2016	Annual Average Employment 2026	Number Change 2016-2026	Percent Growth 2016-2026	Total Annual Average Openings	Typical Education Needed for Entry into Occupation	Hourly Wage 2017
39-9021	Personal Care Aides	13,752	19,073	5,321	38.7%	<b>2,829</b>	High school diploma or equivalent	\$9.07
31-1011	Home Health Aides	5,700	8,332	2,632	46.2%	<b>355</b>	High school diploma or equivalent	\$8.98
35-3021	Combined Food Prep & Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	4,042	5,485	1,443	35.7%	<b>1007</b>	No formal educational credential	\$8.81
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	5,371	6,134	763	17.9%	<b>896</b>	No formal educational credential	\$14.60
41-2011	Cashiers	4,087	4,392	305	7.5%	<b>816</b>	No formal educational credential	\$9.79
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	5,382	5,676	294	5.5%	<b>669</b>	High school diploma or equivalent	\$13.02
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	3,786	4,528	742	19.6%	<b>598</b>	High school diploma or equivalent	\$11.13
35-3031	Waiters & Waitresses	2,406	2,977	571	23.7%	<b>561</b>	No formal educational credential	\$9.76
39-9011	Childcare Workers	2,397	2,849	452	18.9%	<b>421</b>	High school diploma or equivalent	\$9.40
37-2011	Janitors & Cleaners, Ex. Maids & Housekeeping Cleaners	2,501	2,894	393	15.7%	<b>385</b>	No formal educational credential	\$10.22
53-7062	Laborers & Freight, Stock, & Material Movers, Hand	1,666	1,993	327	20.0%	<b>280</b>	No formal educational credential	\$10.80
43-5081	Stock Clerks & Order Fillers	1,810	2,046	236	13.0%	<b>266</b>	No formal educational credential	\$11.86
31-1014	Nursing Assistants	1,856	2,229	373	20.1%	<b>264</b>	Postsecondary non-degree award	\$10.69
53-3032	Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	1,988	2,338	350	17.7%	<b>263</b>	Postsecondary non-degree award	\$21.62
25-9041	Teacher Assistants	1,906	2,208	302	15.9%	<b>237</b>	Some college, no degree	\$20,494
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	1,871	2,146	275	14.7%	<b>237</b>	High school diploma or equivalent	\$21.08
33-9032	Security Guards	1,528	1,755	227	14.9%	<b>236</b>	High school diploma or equivalent	\$14.24

35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	1,242	1,621	379	30.1%	<b>236</b>	No formal educational credential	\$10.11
43-6014	Secretaries & Admin Assistants, Ex. Legal/Medical/Executive	2,153	2,138	-15	-1.0%	<b>226</b>	Information N/A	\$12.57
37-2012	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	1461	1,655	194	13.3	<b>221</b>	No formal educational credential	\$8.98
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Ex Special/Career/Technical Ed	2,421	2,816	395	16.3%	<b>207</b>	Bachelor's degree	\$52,099
25-3098	Substitute Teachers	1,621	1,889	268	16.6%	<b>216</b>	Information N/A	\$11.85
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Ex. Special Education	2,265	2,625	360	15.9%	<b>120</b>	Bachelor's degree	\$52,099
49-9071	Maintenance & Repair Workers, General	1,698	1,947	249	14.7%	<b>200</b>	High school diploma or equivalent	\$12.28
35-2021	Food Preparation Workers	945	1147	202	21.4%	<b>195</b>	No formal educational credential	\$10.32

Source: TWC Tracer2

Table A5 categorizes these occupations into industry occupational families. Some of the same demand industry sectors are also being targeted by the board due to the growth rates and wages of the occupations within these industries. Some of the industry occupational families that are both demand and targeted industries include Health Practitioners and Technical Occupations, Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations, and Education, Training & Library Occupations. The fastest growing demand occupations are entry level in nature and pay wages slightly above minimum wage. The following industry occupational families contain the fast growing occupations in the area and include Personal Care and Service Occupations, Health Support Occupations, Sales and Related Occupations, and Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupation families.

**Table A5: Occupational Families**

Occ Code	Occupational Title	Annual Average Employment 2016	Annual Average Employment 2026	Number Change 2016-2026	Percent Growth 2016-2026	Typical Education Needed for Entry into Occupation	Work Experience in a related Occupation	Typical on-the-job-Training	Hourly Wage 2017	Annual Wage 2017
<b>Personal Care and Service Occupations</b>										
39-9021	Personal Care Aides	13,752	19,072	5321	38.7%	High School diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on the job training	\$9.07	\$18,859
39-9011	Childcare Workers	2,397	2,849	452	18.9%	High School diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on the job training	\$9.40	\$19,561
<b>Healthcare Support Occupation</b>										
31-1011	Home Health Aides	5,700	8,332	2,632	46.2%	High School diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on the job training	\$8.98	\$18,687
31-1014	Nursing Assistants	1,856	2,229	373	20.1%	Postsecondary non-degree award	None	None	\$10.69	\$22,245
<b>Sales and Related Occupation</b>										
41-2031	Retail Salesperson	5,371	6,134	763	14.2%	No Formal Educational credential	None	Short-term on the job training	\$14.60	\$30,366

41-2011	Cashiers	4,087	4,392	305	7.5%	No Formal Educational credential	None	Short-term on the job training	\$9.79	\$20,362
41-1011	First-Line Supervisor of Retail	1,871	2,146	275	14.7%	High School diploma or equivalent	Less than 5 years	None	\$21.08	\$43,853
<b>Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupation</b>										
35-3021	Combined Food Preparation & serving workers, Incl. Fast Food	4,042	5,485	1,443	35.7%	No Formal Educational Credential	None	Short-term on the job training	\$8.81	\$18,321
35-3031	Waiters & Waitresses	2,406	2,977	571	23.7%	No Formal Educational Credential	None	Short-term on the job training	\$9.76	\$20,291
35-2014	Cooks, Restaurant	1,242	1,621	379	30.5%	No Formal Educational Credential	Less than 5 years	Moderate on the job training	\$10.11	\$21,026
<b>Office and Administrative Support Occupation</b>										
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	5,382	5,676	294	5.5%	High School diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on the job training	\$13.02	\$27,081
43-4051	Customer service Representatives	3,786	4,528	742	19.6%	High School diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on the job training	\$11.13	\$23,146
43-6014	Secretaries & Admin Assistance, Ex. Legal / medical / Executive	2,153	2,138	-15	-1.0%	High School diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on the job training	\$12.57	\$26,145
43-5081	Stock clerks & Order Fillies	1,810	2,046	236	13.0%	High School diploma or equivalent	None	Short-term on the job training	\$11.86	\$24,676
<b>Education, Training, and Library Occupation</b>										
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Ex. Special Education	2,265	2,625	360	15.9%	Bachelor's degree	None	None		\$52,099
25-2031	Secondary school teachers / career / technical education	2,421	2,816	395	16.3%	Bachelor's degree	None	None		\$52,415
25-9041	Teacher Assistants	1,906	2,208	302	15.8%	Some college, no degree	None	None		\$20,494
25-2022	Middle School Teachers, EX. Special / career / technical education	1,360	1,578	218	16.0%	Bachelor's degree	None	None		\$53,988
25-3098	Substitute teacher	1,621	1,889	268	16.5%	Information not available	Information not available	Information not available	\$11.86	\$24,676
<b>Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupation</b>										

29-1141	Registered Nurses	2,174	2,599	425	19.5%	Bachelor's degree	None	None	\$33.98	\$70,688
<b>Transportation and Material Moving Occupation</b>										
53-7062	Laborers & Freight, Stock & Material moves, Hand	1,666	1,993	327	19.6%	No Formal Educational Credential	None	Short-term on the job training	\$10.80	\$22,463
53-3032	Heavy & Tractor trailer truck drivers	1,988	2,338	350	17.6%	Postsecondary non-degree award	None	Short-term on the job training	\$21.62	\$44,962
<b>Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupation</b>										
49-9071	Maintenance & Repair Workers, General	1,698	1,947	249	14.7%	High School diploma or equivalent	None	Moderate on the job training	\$12.28	\$25,540
<b>Management Occupations</b>										
11-1021	General & Operations manager	1,356	1,598	242	17.8%	Bachelor's degree	5 years or more	None	\$48.82	\$101,553

Source: TWC Tracer2

WFS Cameron has a diversified economic base as evidenced by the variety of industry sectors. The economy has strong healthcare, education, and government industries. Other industries noted are considered emerging and are projected to grow substantially as a result of SpaceX, LNG plants, and SATA Group USA.

**Table A6: Demand Industries**

Industry Sector	Composite Industries
<b>23 Construction</b>	2381 Building Foundation & Exterior Contractors
<b>31 Manufacturing</b>	3117 Seafood Product Preparation & Packing
<b>56 Administrative &amp; Support, and Waste Management and Remediation Services</b>	5613 Employment Services
<b>61 Educational Services</b>	6111 Elementary & Secondary Schools, Public & Private
<b>62 Health Care &amp; Social Assistance</b>	6212 Offices of Dentist
	6213 Offices of Other Health Practitioners
	6216 Home Health Care Services
	6222 Psychiatric & Substance Abuse Hospitals, Public & Private
	6244 Child Day Care Services
<b>71 Arts, Entertainment, &amp; Recreation</b>	7139 Other Amusement & Recreation Industries

999 Government	9991 Federal Government, Excl. Postal Services, State, and Local Education and Hospitals
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Source: TWC Tracer2

Table A7 illustrates occupational staffing patterns of demand industries. The table identifies the occupations in each industry with either significant employment concentration or a demonstrated high degree of percentage growth during the next ten years. The composite industries are also projected to have a high growth rate according to TWC’s Tracer2.

**Table A7: Industry Staffing Patterns**

Composite Industries	Occupations
<b>2381 Building Foundation &amp; Exterior Contractors</b>	47-2061 Construction laborers; 11-9021 Construction Manager; 47-1011 Supervisors of Construction and Extraction Workers, 11-1021 General and Operations Managers
<b>3117 Seafood Product Preparation &amp; Packing</b>	11-3051 Industrial Production Managers; 43-9061 Office Clerks, General; 49-9071 Maintenance and Repair Workers, General; 53-7062 Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand
<b>5613 Employment Services</b>	13-1071 Human Resources Specialists; 43-6014 Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive; 53-7051 Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators
<b>6111 Elementary &amp; Secondary Schools, Public &amp; Private</b>	25-2021 Elementary School Teachers, Except Special Education; 25-2022 Middle School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education; 25-2031 Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education; 25-9041 Teacher Assistants; 29-2061 Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses; 43-6014 Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive; 43-9061 Office Clerks, General
<b>6212 Offices of Dentist</b>	31-9091 Dental Assistants; 43-6013 Medical Secretaries; 43-4171 Receptionists and Information Clerks; 43-6011 Executive Secretaries and Executive Administrative Assistants
<b>6213 Offices of Other Health Practitioners</b>	31-2022 Physical Therapist Aides; 31-9099 Health Support Workers, All Other; 31-9092 Medical Assistants; 31-1011 Home Health Aides; 43-4171 Receptionist and Information Clerks; 43-6013 Medical Secretaries
<b>6216 Home Health Care Services</b>	31-1011 Home Health Aides; 39-9021 Personal Care Aides; 29-2061 Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses; 31-1014 Nurse Assistants
<b>6222 Psychiatric &amp; Substance Abuse Hospitals, Public &amp; Private</b>	11-9111 Medical and Health Services Managers; 13-1071 Human Resources Specialists; 13-2011 Accountants and Auditors; 15-1151 Computer User Support Specialists; 21-1093 Social and Human Service Assistants; 29-1141 Registered Nurses; 29-2052 Pharmacy Technicians; 29-2061 Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses; 29-2071 Medical Records and Health Information Technicians; 29-1123 Physical Therapist Aides; 43-3021 Billing and Posting Clerks; 43-3031 Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks; 43-4171 Receptionists and Information Clerks; 43-6013 Medical Secretaries; 43-6014 Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive; 43-9061 Office Clerks, General; 49-9071 Maintenance and Repair Workers, General

<b>6244 Child Day Care Services</b>	43-9061 Office Clerks, General; 21-1021 Child, Family, and School Social Workers; 21-1093 Social and Human Service Assistants; 25-9041 Teacher Assistants; 39-9011 Child Care Workers; 49-9071 Maintenance and Repair Workers, General; 43-3031 Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks
<b>7139 Other Amusement &amp; Recreation Industries</b>	49-9071 Maintenance and Repair Workers, General; 43-9061 Office Clerks, General; 43-4051 Customer Service Representatives; 43-3031 Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks; Cashiers; 39-9099 Personal Care and Service Workers, All Other; 41-2011 Cashiers; 35-2011 Cooks, Fast Food; 35-2021 Food Preparation Workers; 11-9051 Food Service Managers; ; 11-1021 General and Operations Managers; Human Resource Specialist
<b>9100 &amp; 9991 Federal Government, Excl. Postal Services</b>	11-9111 Medical and Health Services Managers; 13-1071 Human Resources Specialists; 23-2011 Paralegal and Legal Assistants; 29-1141 Registered Nurses; 29-2034 Radiologic Technologists; 29-2052 Pharmacy Technicians; 29-2061 Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses; 29-2071 Medical Records and Health Information Technicians; 31-9092 Medical Assistants; 33-3051 Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers; 43-3031 Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks; 43-9061 Office Clerks, General; 43-6014 Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive; 49-3023 Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics; 49-9071 Maintenance and Repair Workers, General

Source: TWC Tracer2

*3. A list of the target occupations.*

**Board Response:**

WFS Cameron selected occupations that support local, growing, and emerging industries in Cameron County. The targeted list includes occupations that provide career pathway opportunities and have a high likelihood of employment upon completion of the training. Additionally, the projected job growth and annual openings are strong in most of these occupations. There are a number of occupations selected in which data may not be available or, in some cases, may not reflect significant growth, but local knowledge of the future needs of emerging industries have enabled us to include them on the list.

The selected targeted occupations employ an estimated 29,630 individuals and are projected to grow by 15% and add an additional 5,000 jobs to the Cameron County workforce. The occupations adding the most jobs can be found in the following industries: 6111 Elementary & Secondary Schools, Public & Private, 6216 Home Health Care Services, and 6211 Office of Physicians. Other industries that will have a significant impact in the growth of our economy include Building Foundation & Exterior Contractors, and Chemical Manufacturing. The anticipated growth is attributed to the current and pending construction of 3 LNG plants, Space X, a precision machining and manufacturing plant, and a steel plant.

Some of the occupations targeted, such as Medical Secretaries, Maintenance & Repair Workers, Accountants & Auditors, Electricians, Plumbers, and General and Operations Managers fall into multiple industries and their projected growth looks strong. All of these occupations also provide career progression opportunities for the residents of Cameron County.

Table A8:

## WIOA Targeted Occupation List—Cameron County WDB

Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) or Occupational Information Network (O*NET) Job Code	Targeted Occupation Job Title	Annual Average Employment 2016	Annual Average Employment 2026	Number Change 2016-2026	Percentage Growth 2016-2026 (%)	Annual Openings due to Growth	Starting Salary per Hour (Entry Wage) *Annual	Top Salary per Hour (Experienced Wage) *Annual	Typical Education Needed for Entry into Occupation	Are there Eligible Training Providers (ETPs) offering training for this occupation?	How many individuals will ETPs train and/or certify to fill current openings?	Additional Rationale, Local Wisdom, and Comments	Is this a Career Pathway Occupation? (yes or no)	Labor Market and Career Information Data Source (s)
25-2021	Elementary School Teachers, Ex. Special Education	2265	2625	360	15.89%	36	**43,855	**56,220	Bachelor's Degree	Yes	4	15.9% Growth	Yes	Tracer 2
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Ex. Special Education	2421	2816	395	16.32%	40	**40,128	**58,559	Bachelor's Degree	Yes	16	16.3% Growth	Yes	Tracer 2
25-9042	Teacher Assistant	1906	2208	302	15.84%	30	**17,347	**22,068	Post-Secondary/ Certification	Yes	3	Supports Target Occupations	Yes	Tracer 2
29-1141	Registered Nurses	2174	2599	425	19.55%	42	\$25.07	\$38.44	AA or Bachelor's Degree	Yes	5	Supports Target Industries	Yes	Tracer 2
25-2022	Middle School Teachers, Ex. Special/Career/Technical	1360	1578	218	16.03%	22	**44,220	**58,872	Bachelor's Degree	Yes	10	Supports Target Industries	Yes	Tracer 2
49-9071	Maintenance & Repair Workers, General	1698	1947	249	14.66%	25	\$8.96	\$13.94	OJT/High School Diploma or GED	No, OJT	3	Supports Target Industries	Yes	Tracer 2
11-1021	General & Operations Managers	1356	1598	242	17.85%	24	\$24.03	\$0.00	Bachelor's Degree	Yes	1	Supports Target Industries	Yes	Tracer 2
29-2061	Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses	1039	1200	161	15.50%	16	\$18.00	\$0.00	Post-Secondary/ Certification	Yes	2	Supports Target Industries	Yes	Tracer 2
33-3051	Police & Sheriff's Patrol Officers	1013	1167	154	15.20%	15	\$16.30	\$30.28	Certificate/ Associate's Degree	Yes	2	15.2% Growth	Yes	Tracer 2

43-6013	Medical Secretaries	1222	1546	324	26.51%	32	\$9.73	\$14.63	High School / GED	Yes	5	26.5% Growth	Yes	Tracer 2
13-2011	Accountants & Auditors	609	718	109	17.90%	11	\$19.26	\$37.95	Bachelor's Degree	Yes	3	17.9% Growth	Yes	Tracer 2
51-2041	Structural Metal Fabricators & Fitters*	158	143	-15	-9.49%	-2	\$13.64	\$21.85	OJT/High School Diploma or GED	Yes	2	Supports Target Industries	Yes	Tracer 2
31-9091	Dental Assistants	321	375	54	16.82%	5	\$12.13	\$18.26	Post-Secondary/ Certification	Yes	2	16.8% Growth	Yes	Tracer 2
49-3023	Auto Service Technicians & Mechanics	509	565	56	11.00%	6	\$9.77	\$20.36	Post-Secondary/ Certification	Yes	2	11% Growth	Yes	Tracer 2
11-9111	Medical & Health Service Managers	216	276	60	27.78%	6	\$29.07	\$74.01	Bachelor's Degree	Yes	1	Supports Target Industries	Yes	Tracer 2
15-1151	Computer User Support Specialist	243	285	42	17.28%	4	\$12.41	\$23.11	Some college, no degree	Yes	2	17.3% Growth	Yes	Tracer 2
47-2111	Electricians	300	333	33	11.00%	3	\$11.42	\$19.22	High school/GED/ Apprenticeship	Yes	4	Supports Target Occupations	Yes	Tracer 2
51-4041	Machinist	235	250	15	6.38%	2	\$9.79	\$21.08	High School Diploma or GED	Yes	10	Local Wisdom, New industry	Yes	Tracer 2
49-3031	Bus & Truck Mechanics & Diesel Engine Specialist	223	261	38	17.04%	4	\$11.89	\$19.14	High School Diploma or GED	Yes	2	17% Growth; Support Target Industries	Yes	Tracer 2
29-2034	Radiologic Technologist	163	189	26	15.95%	3	\$12.28	\$28.52	Associate's Degree	Yes	1	Supports Target Industries	Yes	Tracer 2
29-2072	Medical Records Specialist	164	189	25	15.24%	2	\$9.98	\$20.49	Post-Secondary/ Certification	Yes	1	Growth in Medical Facilities	Yes	Tracer 2
17-3023	Electrical & Electronic Engineering Technicians*	1510 8	1680 3	1,69 5	11.2%		\$19.74	\$30.34	Associate's Degree	Yes	2	New industry growth in area	Yes	Tracer 2
47-2152	Plumbers, Pipefitters, & Steamfitters	99	114	15	15.15%	2	\$10.55	\$15.97	High School Diploma or GED	Yes	2	Supports Target Industries	Yes	Tracer 2
49-9041	Industrial Machinery Mechanics	178	201	23	12.92%	2	\$12.12	\$23.78	High School Diploma or GED	Yes	2	Support Target Industries	Yes	Tracer 2

15-1251	Computer Programmer	114	121	7	6.14%	1	\$20.52	\$38.61	Bachelor's Degree	Yes	3	Support Target Industries	Yes	Tracer 2
17-3026	Industrial Engineering Technicians*	3261	3553	292	9.0%	29	\$20.01	\$37.61	Associate's Degree	Yes	2	Supports Target Industries	Yes	Tracer 2
47-2061	Construction Laborer	418	521	103	24.6%	10	\$8.00	\$11.00	No formal	No	10	Supports Target Occupations	Yes	Tracer 2
11-9021	Construction Manager	129	160	31	24.03%	3	\$20.41	\$38.53	Bachelor's Degree	Yes	1	Supports Target Occupations	Yes	Tracer 2
49-9096	Riggers*	3945	4683	738	18.7%	74	\$12.00	\$18.00	High School/GED	Yes	5	Supports Target Occupations	Yes	Tracer 2
31-9094	Medical Transcriptionists*	4810	5074	264	5.5%	26	\$9.86	\$21.29	Associate's Degree	Yes	4	Growth in Medical Facilities	Yes	Tracer 2
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	1988	2338	350	17.61%	35	\$12.73	\$26.06	CDL/High School Diploma or GED	Yes	4	Supports Target Industries	Yes	Tracer 2
49-9021	Heating, AC & Refrigeration Mechanics & Installers	209	247	38	18.18%	4	\$11.83	\$16.73	Certificate/ Associate's Degree	Yes	4	Supports Target Industries	Yes	Tracer 2
29-2042	Emergency Medical Technicians	95	118	23	24.21%	2	\$10.77	\$14.80	Postsecondary Certificate 1	Yes	2	Supports Target Industries	Yes	Tracer 2
29-2043	Paramedics (See EMT)*			0					Certificate 2	Yes	3	Supports Target Industries	Yes	Tracer 2

Source: TWC Tracer2

\*No local data; State data noted if available

\*\* No hourly rate; Annual rate noted

WFS Cameron identified the targeted industries listed in Table A9. The industry projected to create the most jobs within the next ten years is Elementary & Secondary Schools, Public & Private. This industry group is projected to grow 30.6% within the next ten years. The following targeted occupations are part of this industry and include, but are not limited to, Elementary School Teachers, Secondary School Teachers, Middle School Teachers, Teacher Assistants, Secretaries & Administrative Assistants, and Child Care Workers. Demand occupations that are part of this industry include Janitors and Cleaners, and Office Clerks.

Home Health Care Services is the industry group projected to create the second largest number of jobs with a growth rate of 35.5% over the next ten years. The following targeted occupations are part of this industry and include, but are not limited to, Licensed Vocational Nurses, Registered Nurses, Billing and Posting Clerks, Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks, Medical and Health Service Managers, Dental Assistants, Medical Records and Health Information Technicians, and Medical Secretaries. Demand occupations that are part of this industry include Home Health Aides, Personal Care Aides, and Food Preparation Workers.

The industry groups selected have at least a 20% job growth rate and are found in either TWC's *Adding the Most Jobs* or *Fastest Growing* Listing. A limited number of industry groups were selected based on local information regarding the site selection in this area by three LNG plants as well as a machining/manufacturing plant and Space X launch facility. WFS Cameron anticipates above average growth in construction and manufacturing.

**Table A9: Targeted Industry List**

2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Code (4-digit) <sup>1</sup>	NAICS Industry Name	Total Current Positions for the Industry in the Area	Total Projected Positions in 10 Years	Additional Rationale, Local Wisdom, Comments <sup>4</sup>	Labor Market and Career Information Data Source(s)	Job Growth Rate
2371	Utility System Construction	366	558	On TWC's Adding the Most Jobs List	Tracer2	52.5%
6216	Home Health Care Services	15,195	21,704	On TWC's Fastest Growing & Adding the Most Jobs Lists	Tracer2	42.8%
5511	Management of Companies and Enterprises	420	568	Industry has over 30% growth and On TWC's Adding the Most Jobs List	Tracer2	35.5%
5415	Computer Systems Design and Related Services	127	166	Industry has at least a 30% growth rate & supports targeted occupations	Tracer2	30.7%
6241	Individual and Family Services	6635	8562	Industry has over 20% growth and On TWC's Fastest Growing & Adding the Most Jobs Lists	Tracer2	29.0%
4441	Building Material and Supplies Dealers	1189	1489	Industry has over 20% growth and On TWC's Fastest Growing & Adding the Most Jobs Lists	Tracer2	25.2%
2381	Foundation, Structure, and Building Exterior Contractors	496	496	Industry has over 20% growth rate & supports targeted occupations	Tracer2	22.8%
6211	Office of Physicians	3703	4507	Industry has over 20% growth and On TWC's Fastest Growing & Adding the Most Jobs Lists	Tracer2	21.7%
4841	General Freight Trucking	1236	1500	Industry has over 20% growth & On TWC's Fastest Growing & Adding the Most Jobs Lists	Tracer2	21.4%

5614	Business Support Services	2937	3554	Industry has over 20% growth and On TWC's Fastest Growing & Adding the Most Jobs List, & supports targeted occupations	Tracer2	21.0%
4411	Automobile Dealers	1631	1972	Industry has over 20% growth and On TWC's Fastest Growing List & Adding the Most Jobs Lists	Tracer2	20.4%
3327	Machine Shops; Turned Product; and Screw, Nut, and Bolt Manufacturing	89	106	Industry has close to 20% growth rate; supports targeted occupations; and local wisdom indicates industry will be impacted by new manufacturing business in the valley (SATA USA)	Tracer2	19.1%
5412	Accounting, Tax Preparation, Bookkeeping, and Payroll Services	100	150	Industry has close to a 20% growth rate; supports targeted occupations, and is on TWC's Fastest Growing Industries	Tracer2	18.3%
3261	Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing	1650	2060	BEDC, WFS CAMERON, local & state official have met with manufacturing company and Space X to establish a plant in area	Tracer2	18.3%*
6111	Elementary and Secondary Schools	17,596	20,018	On TWC's Fastest Growing & Adding the Most Jobs Lists	Tracer2	13.8%
6221	General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	3,758	4,255	On TWC's Adding the most Jobs List	Tracer2	13.2%
9993	Local Government, Except. Education & Hospitals	6,760	7,621	On TWC's Adding the Most Jobs List	Tracer2	12.7%
2389	Other Specialty Trade Contractors	270	301	BEDC, WFS CAMERON, local & state official have met with manufacturing company and Space X to establish a plant in area	Tracer2	11.5%
3251	Basic Chemical Manufacturing	N/A*	N/A*	LNG representatives from 3 plants have spoken with local EDCs, workforce board, local & state officials to establish pipelines in the area	LMCI	9.1%*

Source: TWC Tracer2

\*Percentage obtained from 3-digit NAICS codes

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

**Board Response:**

An analysis of the most prevalent knowledge areas required collectively for the targeted high-demand occupations revealed the top knowledge areas needed and sought by employers. According to the high number of times it appears, training must focus on the *English language* to enable job seekers to find and retain employment in these targeted occupations. Employers hiring within these occupations seek candidates that possess knowledge of the structure and content of the English language, including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar. This knowledge area is closely followed by *Customer and Personal Service*, which requires candidates to possess knowledge of principles of processes for providing customer service and personal services. This includes customer needs assessment, meeting quality standards for services, and evaluation of customer satisfaction. Other required knowledge areas to meet employer expectations are *mathematics, computer and electronics*,

and clerical. Notable knowledge areas include *Psychology, Mechanical, and Administration and Management*, based on the frequency of appearance.

In analyzing the top skills collectively for the high demand targeted occupations, *active listening* was the skill that appeared the most frequently. According to the results, *employers highly value listening skills* and expect employees to *give full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times*. This skill is closely followed by *speaking, critical thinking, and reading comprehension*. Employers valued *speaking skills* and want their workers to talk to others to convey information effectively. They also value critical thinking and expect their workers to be able to use logic and reason to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems. Lastly, employers expect workers to have good reading comprehension and be able to understand written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents. The final skill that rounded off the fifth position, but which did not appear as frequently as the other four skills, was *coordination*. It appears that employers expect workers to have the ability to adjust their action in relation to others' action.

WFS Cameron has determined, as a result of employer feedback, that soft skills training is an essential part of workforce services in order to ensure participants are able to obtain and retain employment. A combination of interpersonal people skills, social skills, communication skills, character traits, and attitudes are necessary in order to produce effective and production worker. Soft skills are desirable qualities that do not depend on acquired occupational knowledge. They include common sense, work ethic, communication skills, ability to deal with people, problem solving skills, and a positive, flexible attitude. Currently, our workforce center contractor offers soft skills training to all program participants, addressing the employer needs.

**Table A10: Knowledge and Skills for High Demand Targeted Occupations**

Knowledge	Frequency	Skills	Frequency
Administration and Management	8	Active Learning	1
Building and Construction	7	Active Listening	37
Clerical	13	Critical Thinking	25
Computers and Electronics	14	Learning Strategies	3
Customer and Personal Service	30	Mathematics	2
Design	7	Monitoring	8
Economics and Accounting	2	Reading Comprehension	22
Education and Training	7	Speaking	27
Engineering and Technology	5	Writing	9
English Language	38	Coordination	12
Law and Government	2	Instructing	4
Mathematics	16	Service Orientation	7
Mechanical	11	Social Perceptiveness	9
Medicine and Dentistry	8	Complex Problem Solving	6
Personnel and Human Resources	3	Equipment Maintenance	4
Physics	2	Equipment Selection	1

Production and Processing	5	Operation and Control	5
Psychology	11	Operation Monitoring	7
Public Safety and Security	7	Programming	1
Sociology and Anthropology	3	Quality Control Analysis	2
Telecommunications	2	Repairing	4
Therapy and Counseling	3	Troubleshooting	6
Transportation	2	Judgment and Decision Making	2
		Time Management	5
		Installation	1

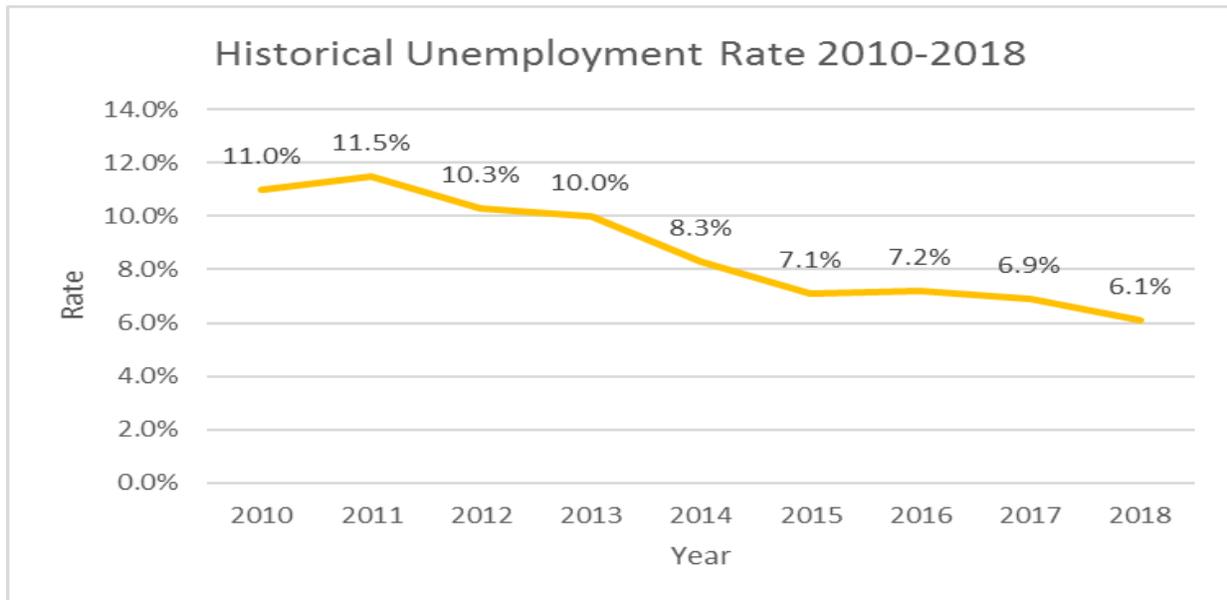
Source: ONET

5. *An analysis of the regional workforce, including current labor force employment and unemployment data, information on labor market trends, and educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment.*

**Board Response:**

Cameron County has a civilian labor force (CLF) of 166,351 (Nov. 2018). The current average unemployment rate is 5.3 percent (Nov., 2018) with a total of 8,774 individuals looking for employment. The estimated employment for all occupations is 156,577 (Nov. 2018). The total unemployment rate has decrease almost half from the 2010 rate of 11.2 percent to an average rate of 6.1 for 2018. As seen in Graph A1 below, the unemployment rate has steadily decreased.

**Graph A1: Historical Unemployment Rate 2010 to 2018**

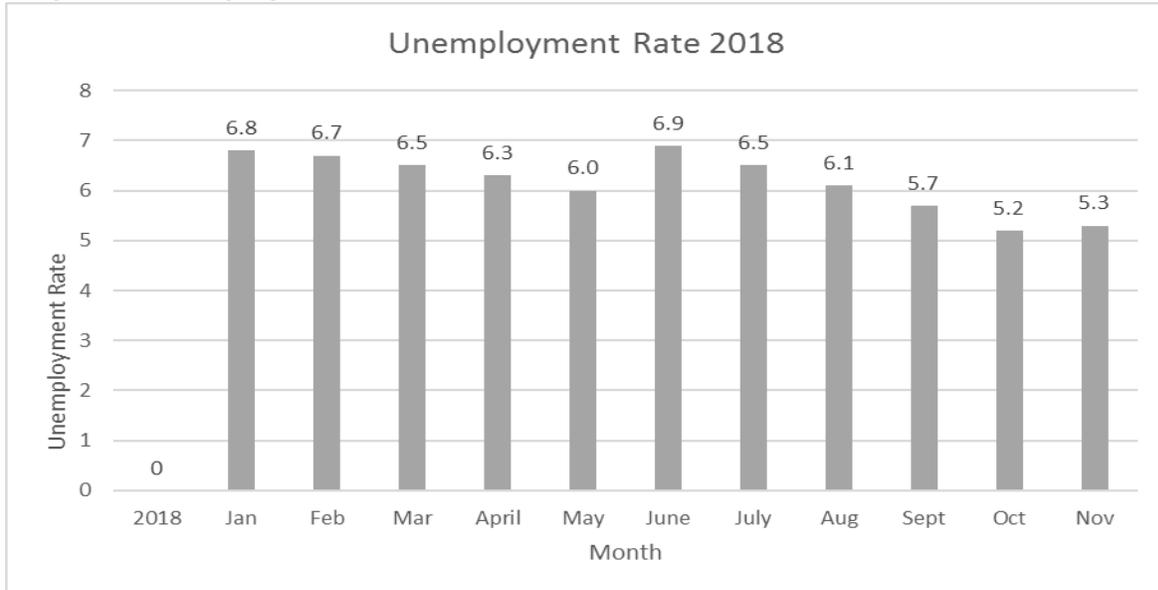


Source: TWC Tracer2

Graph A2 shows the current monthly unemployment rate for 2018. There have been slight increases and decreases during the past 11 months. The highest rate recorded for 2018 was 6.9

percent during the month of June and the lowest rate recorded was 5.2 percent during the month of October.

**Graph A2: Unemployment Rate 2018**



Source: TWC Tracer 2

### Educational Attainment

The educational attainment for Cameron County can be seen in the Table below. According to the 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 24% of individuals ages 25+ in the area reported an attainment of a high school diploma. The total percentage of the population that reported attainment of Bachelor’s Degree was 12.2% and 17.2% for Bachelor’s Degree or higher. In comparison to the state education attainment levels, Cameron County has significantly lower attainment rates for Bachelor’s Degrees and Graduate or Professional Degrees in spite of having equal percentages of High School diploma achievement.

**Table A11: Educational Attainment**

Post-Secondary Educational Attainment for Cameron County Population 25 and Over Based 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates			
Educational Attainment	Actual Number	Area Percent	Statewide Percent
High School Diploma	60,972	25.1	25.1
Some college, no degree	41,873	17.2	22.1
Associate Degree	16,261	5.8	6.9
Bachelor's Degree	29,742	12.2	18.8
Graduate or Prof. Degree	12,145	5.0	9.9

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The following tables show the top credentials awarded in Cameron County. The vast majority of the credentials awarded are certifications and less than 2-year degrees, with the major concentration being in the Healthcare industry.

**Table A12: Educational Awards**

Awards in Cameron County, Texas											
CIP Code	Title	Less than 1 year	At least 1 Year but less than 2	Associate's Degree	At least 2 Years but less than 4	Bachelor's Degree	Post-Baccalaureate	Master's Degree	Post-master's Degree	Doctorate's degree	Total Awards
	<b>Program</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>952</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1886</b>
51.0801	Medical/Clinical Assistant	72	486	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	562
12.0401	Cosmetology/Cosmetologist, General	8	141	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	149
24.0102	General Studies	0	0	133	0	0	0	0	0	0	133
51.0713	Medical Insurance Coding Specialist/Coder	0	89	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	89
48.0508	Welding Technology/Welder	76	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	76
52.0302	Accounting Technology/Technician and Bookkeeping	70	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	70
47.0201	Heating, Air Conditioning, Ventilation and Refrigeration Maintenance Technology/Technician	3	53	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	58
51.0601	Dental Assisting/Assistant	0	52	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	52
51.3902	Nursing Assistant/Aide and Patient Care Assistant/Aide	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50
43.0104	Criminal Justice/Safety Studies	0	0	49	0	0	0	0	0	0	49
51.0710	Medical Office Assistant/Specialist	15	23	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	48
15.0501	Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Engineering Technology/Technician	0	46	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	46
13.1210	Early Childhood Education and Teaching	0	0	44	0	0	0	0	0	0	44
44.0701	Social Work	0	0	43	0	0	0	0	0	0	43
11.1006	Computer Support Specialist	22	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	41

Source: JobsEQ

**Table A13** represents the shortfall in training concentrations for the occupational groups noted. According to the data, *Registered Nurses, Elementary School Teachers-Except Special Education, Secondary School Teachers-Except Special Education and Career/Technical Education, Managers, All Other, and Middle School Teachers, Except Special Education and Career/Technical Education* have the greatest shortfall in credentials awarded.

**Table A13: Educational Shortfalls**

Training Concentration, Cameron County, Texas, Occupations with 75%+ College-Educated					
SOC	Title	2018Q3 Employment	Awards (2016-2017)	Training Concentration	Shortfall
25-2031	Secondary School Teachers, Except Special and Career/Technical Education	2149	8	2%	336
29-1141	Registered Nurses	2525	15	8%	172
11-9199	Managers, All Other	965	10	6%	150
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	1398	17	14%	104
21-1012	Educational, Guidance, School, and Vocational Counselors	396	0	0	49
21-1021	Child, Family, and School Social Workers	468	16	25%	46
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	1091	22	33%	44
11-9032	Education Administrators, Elementary and Secondary School	476	0	0	39
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors	781	4	11%	35
27-3031	Public Relations Specialists	205	0	0	31
25-1199	Postsecondary Teachers, All Other	125	0	0	30
33-3051	Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers	1092	12	29%	30
11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	258	0	0	28
21-1014	Mental Health Counselors	191	0	0	27
21-1022	Healthcare Social Workers	292	12	0.3	27
23-1011	Lawyers	472	0	0	24
33-3021	Detectives and Criminal Investigators	794	8	28%	21
25-9031	Instructional Coordinators	148	0	0	20
39-9031	Fitness Trainers and Aerobics Instructors	148	0	0	19
27-2022	Coaches and Scouts	163	0	0	18
29-1127	Speech-Language Pathologists	243	0	0	18
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	175	0	0	17
19-3031	Clinical, Counseling, and School Psychologists	101	0	0	14
21-1023	Mental Health and Substance Abuse Social Workers	141	4	23%	14
25-2052	Special Education Teachers, Kindergarten and Elementary School	242	0	0	14

Source: JobsEQ®  
Data as of 2018Q3

**Table A14** below shows a snapshot of local job seekers registered in Work in Texas (WIT) job matching system on January 24, 2017. The data indicates that 82% of job seekers ages 25-34, have a high school diploma, or higher. The 35-44 demographic are showing a 75% high school diploma or higher completion rate. Surrounding school districts have implemented aggressive recovery programs which has helped to close the high school completion gap in the county.

**Table A14 Educational Levels of Job Seekers by Age Group in Work in Texas, January 24, 2017**

Educational Level	Job Seekers															Total Job Seekers	Total %
	14-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	14-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+			
0- Not Completed First Grade		3	1	7	24	13	2	0.00%	0.13%	0.05%	0.43%	2.19%	7.22%	15.38%	50	0.58%	
1- First Grade			1		2	3		0.00%	0.00%	0.05%	0.00%	0.18%	1.67%	0.00%	6	0.07%	
2- Second Grade		1	2	1	11	2		0.00%	0.04%	0.09%	0.06%	1.00%	1.11%	0.00%	17	0.20%	
3- Third Grade			3	7	23	6		0.00%	0.00%	0.14%	0.43%	2.10%	3.33%	0.00%	39	0.45%	
4- Fourth Grade			3	9	7	4		0.00%	0.00%	0.14%	0.56%	0.64%	2.22%	0.00%	23	0.27%	
5- Fifth Grade			4	12	22	6		0.00%	0.00%	0.18%	0.74%	2.01%	3.33%	0.00%	44	0.51%	
6- Sixth Grade	2	7	31	95	130	21	3	0.17%	0.30%	1.41%	5.88%	11.86%	11.67%	23.08%	289	3.35%	
7- Seventh Grade	3	5	18	27	20	5		0.25%	0.21%	0.82%	1.67%	1.82%	2.78%	0.00%	78	0.90%	
8- Eight Grade	15	33	55	76	39	12	1	1.26%	1.41%	2.51%	4.70%	3.56%	6.67%	7.69%	231	2.68%	
9- Ninth Grade	48	101	154	144	91	13		4.03%	4.32%	7.02%	8.91%	8.30%	7.22%	0.00%	551	6.38%	
10- Tenth Grade	47	110	105	80	50	8		3.94%	4.70%	4.79%	4.95%	4.56%	4.44%	0.00%	400	4.63%	
11- Eleventh Grade	90	162	178	144	91	9	1	7.55%	6.93%	8.11%	8.91%	8.30%	5.00%	7.69%	675	7.82%	
12- HS Diploma GED	663	982	790	488	266	37	4	55.62%	42.00%	36.01%	30.18%	24.27%	20.56%	30.77%	3230	37.43%	
13- Vocational School	159	345	266	125	84	3		13.34%	14.76%	12.12%	7.73%	7.66%	1.67%	0.00%	982	11.38%	
14- Two Years College, Technical or Vocational School	79	229	233	138	73	10		6.63%	9.79%	10.62%	8.53%	6.66%	5.56%	0.00%	762	8.83%	
15- Associates Degree	17	63	60	48	25	4		1.43%	2.69%	2.73%	2.97%	2.28%	2.22%	0.00%	217	2.51%	
16- Three Years College, Technical or Vocational School	26	77	78	54	36	7		2.18%	3.29%	3.56%	3.34%	3.28%	3.89%	0.00%	278	3.22%	
17- Bachelor's Degree	42	196	177	132	79	13	1	3.52%	8.38%	8.07%	8.16%	7.21%	7.22%	7.69%	640	7.42%	

18- Master's Degree	1	22	32	26	20	3	1	0.08%	0.94%	1.46%	1.61%	1.82%	1.67%	7.69%	105	1.22%
19- Doctoral Degree		2	3	4	3	1		0.00%	0.09%	0.14%	0.25%	0.27%	0.56%	0.00%	13	0.15%
<b>Grand Total</b>	1192	2338	2194	1617	1096	180	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8,630	-
<b>Total Number High School/GED and Higher</b>	987	1916	1639	1015	586	78	6	82.80%	81.95%	74.70%	62.77%	53.47%	43.33%	46.15%	6227	72.16%

Source: WorkInTexas

The success of any workforce or economic development activities in this region will continue to be negatively impacted by the human resource challenges related to literacy and the skills gap reality. The primary problem to be addressed is the number of workers in the region that lack proficiency in English, and work skills to meet the demands of today's employers. Recruitment challenges point to a lack of career mindset, attendance problems, and the inability to pass basic screening processes, such as drug testing and criminal background checks. For existing workers, broad-based employment skills such as communication skills, customer service skills, and basic competencies in reading, writing, and mathematics also top the list. Due to these factors, free high school equivalency training and soft skills training are now a part of our workforce service offerings. WFS Cameron believes that employment success is at least initially derived from these skills.

Overall, the Cameron County population, when compared with the general population of Texas, is:

- Less Educated---33.62% of Civilian Labor Force (CLF) without high school diploma, and only 17.3% of the workforce holds a Bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 29.1% for the State. (2013-2017 ACS)
- Lower Skilled---Less education and training due to low educational levels translates to the majority of workers without postsecondary training, particularly in available high wage, high skill job categories.
- With a Significant number of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals---73.4% speak a language other than English at home and for the total population 5 years and older, 27.1% speak English less than "very well". (2013-2017 ACS)

The following tables show the number of individuals with a disability and the estimated Veteran population of Cameron County. According to the 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, approximately 15.8% or 47,500 of the population Age 16 and Over has a disability.

**Table A15: Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population with a Disability**

<b>Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population with a Disability Age 16 and Over 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates</b>			
	Population	Population with Disability	Percent of Population
Cameron	300,555	47,500	15.8%
Texas	20,527,785	2,869,976	13.9%

US	250,884,102	37,221,127	14.8%
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Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Total Civilian Veteran population for Cameron County was 4.9% or 14,016. This is significantly less than the percentage of the population for both the State of Texas and the United States.

**Table A16: Veteran Status, Civilian Population 18 years+**

<b>Veteran Status, Civilian Population 18 years+ 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates</b>			
	Population 18yrs +	Civilian Veteran	Percent of Population
Cameron	288,124	14,016	4.9%
Texas	20,115,418	1,482,971	7.4 %
US	246,379,319	18,939,219	7.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

WFS Cameron is committed to serving the following target populations:

**Table A17: Target Populations: Individuals with Barriers to Employment**

<b>Target Populations: Individuals with Barriers to Employment</b>
Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers
Ex-offenders
Homeless Individuals
Individuals with disabilities
Individuals who are English language learners
Individuals who have low levels of literacy
Individuals lacking a High School Diploma
Low Income Individuals (including TANF and SNAP recipient)
Older Individuals
Non-custodial parents
Veterans
Youth who are in or have aged out of foster care system
Individuals who are unemployed, including the long-term unemployed

Source: TWC

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

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

**Board Response:**

Cameron County has a number of assets that can contribute to the growth of a healthy workforce, including a network of higher education institutions, an international airport, a deep water port, a medical school, Space X, emerging industries, and proximity to an international border to support logistics and transportation industries.

Other advantages that WFS Cameron has, includes:

- Wide array of professionals and community stakeholders who possess vast experience serving on the Board of Directors,
- Highly experienced staff with strong community ties and strong backgrounds in education and workforce development programs and services,
- Budget of twenty-one million dollars provided through federal and state sources,
- Physical and technology infrastructure with established systems including access to technical assistance through the Texas Workforce Commission,
- Wide range of training providers,
- Mandates established through federal and state legislation to operate one-stop career Centers, including business services,
- Wide array of programs including Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment & Training (SNAP E & T), CHOICES, CHOICES Non-Custodial Parent (NCP), Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), Veterans, Wagner-Peyser, and Childcare,
- Funding source to enhance customer skills through referrals to training programs, and
- Mobile Unit that operates county-wide.

However, the success of any workforce or economic development activities in the South Texas region will continue to be negatively impacted by the human resource challenges related to literacy and the skills gap reality. While all activities proposed herein are necessary to build a sustainable and quality workforce, the primary problem to be faced and addressed is the number of workers in the region that lack proficiency in English and who are not equipped to meet the demands of today's employers. Past employers surveyed revealed that 40% of companies reported trouble finding qualified workers for even entry-level positions. Recruitment challenges point to a lack of career mindset, attendance problems, and the inability to pass basic screening processes, such as drug testing and criminal background checks. For existing workers, broad-

based employment skills such as communication skills, customer service skills, and basic competencies in reading, writing, and mathematics also top the list.

Overall, the Cameron County population, when compared with the general population of Texas, is:

- Less Educated---34% of Civilian Labor Force (CLF) without high school diploma, and only 17.2% of the workforce holds a Bachelor's degree or higher compared to Texas at 24.2% and 37.1% respectively.
- Lower Skilled---Less education and training due to low educational levels translates to the majority of workers without postsecondary training, particularly in available high wage, high skill job categories. Also noted by employer surveys is a need for basic work readiness/soft skills to allow them to get and/or keep a job.
- Highly Unemployed and Underemployed---unemployment rate higher than state rate and fluctuating between 5.9% and 5.3% this last year compared to Texas at 3.7% in 11/2018.
- With a Significant number of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) job seekers

Improving educational attainment levels and increasing basic skill levels is a critical component of WFS Cameron's economic competitiveness. Without these building blocks, workers in the region will continue to lack the necessary foundation upon which to build a solid career. Without a literate and engaged workforce, employers will continue to face obstacles to economic vitality.

These basic demographic characteristics of Cameron County reveal a great need for a workforce organization with the resources to enable job seekers to transform into a skilled workforce in an effort to meet industry needs. Effective services and programs must be in place to fully develop the region's talent while addressing the socio-economic factors that plague this region.

The objectives outlined below were established to support WFS Cameron's mission of creating economic growth and enhancing the quality of life for the citizens and employers of Cameron County. WFS Cameron strives to deliver services in the most efficient and effective way in an effort to attain the agency's objectives:

- Ensure employers' workforce needs are met through business services designed around addressing business needs in the areas of recruiting, hiring and retaining qualified workers.
- Ensure that One Stop Center customers are able to meet their employment goals through the provision of workforce development and training services tailored to meet their individual needs.
- Build awareness with Cameron County residents around the benefits and availability of workforce services.
- Provide youth greater access for to higher education.
- Investigate the need to provide additional employment and training services for special populations such as disabled, youth, and ex-offenders.

- Build greater training capacity by promoting apprenticeship, incumbent worker, and customized training.
- Promote gains in adult literacy and job skills levels.
- Establish and strengthen inter-agency agreements and partnerships which promote workforce development.
- Incubate community, workforce and economic development initiatives in critical areas such as early childhood education and youth programs.
- Promote greater access to high quality childcare programs.
- Assure the organization is properly positioned to deliver greater services in response to emerging industries.
- Expand collaborations and networks with community-based organizations in key areas such as education, social services, and health services.
- Align resources to operate more efficiently in order to enhance customer service and respond to decreased funding.
- Ensure the expenditures of resources comply with all federal, state and local policies, laws and regulations through vigilant oversight.
- Increase the resources available for workforce and economic development through grant writing and other strategic relationships.
- Minimize duplication of services or overlapping of resources to ensure efficiency as well as effectiveness by expanding community networks and partnerships with CBOs.
- Developing additional mechanisms to attract private and philanthropic investment in workforce and economic development.
- Align financial resources with training offered, such that every dollar possible is linked to available jobs of market value in our region.
- Continue to advocate the “College Credit for Heroes” and other Veterans-service programs.

WFS Cameron is working with numerous system partners to develop strategies, activities, and services in an effort to increase employment opportunities for job seekers in both demand and targeted industries and occupations. The long-term strategy of the board is to continue developing partnerships, exchanging information, and collaborating on projects to effectively direct workforce activities in the region. The alignment of workforce activities with economic development has enabled the Board to identify trainings that meet the needs of industry. WFS Cameron will continue to enhance and redirect services and resources to provide a system of flexible and responsive activities.

The following tables contain a listing of colleges and universities in the area as well as the occupational training providers. Training providers outside of the workforce area have been included since WFS Cameron realizes that residents of this county seek training services throughout the region due to training capacity and limited program offerings.

**Table A18: Occupational Training Providers**

Occupational Training Providers	
Colleges & Universities	
The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley	Texas Southmost College
Texas State Technical College	
Career Schools	
South Texas Vocational Technical Institute	LHCT Training Center
Allied Skills Training Center	McAllen Careers Institute
Cameron County Education Initiative	New Start School
General Educational Services of Texas	RGV Careers – An Institute of Higher Learning
Southern Industrial Career Centers	South Texas Training Center
Claudy Vocational Institute, Inc.	Southern Careers Institute
Valley Baptist Medical Center School of Vocational Nursing	Brownsville Dental Assistant School
Valley Grande Institute for Academic Studies	The College of Healthcare Professions
DATS/Rio Grande Valley	

Source: TWC

Additionally, there are a few apprenticeship programs that provide training for individuals interested in careers as electricians or plumbers and pipefitters. These offerings enable individuals to enter immediate employment and follow a career pathway in their chosen field of study.

**Table A19: Apprenticeship Opportunities**

Apprenticeship Opportunities
Rio Grande Valley Chapter I.E.C. Inc.
Universal Metal Products

Source: TWC

As noted in Table A18, the large number of training providers enable individuals to select from a vast number of programs. Unfortunately, not all training programs meet the needs of new and emerging industries. Specialized and customized training programs will need to be developed to

provide job seekers with the skill sets requirement of potential employers. The following describes the capacity of these programs to supply graduates for future hiring demands:

- Healthcare - there is a vast number of training programs in the area that can meet most of the demands of the labor force. There are limitations to the number of participants due to capacity issues particularly in nursing. Programs of study range from certificate programs to Post Baccalaureate degrees.
- Education - demand in this industry requires individuals to have a bachelor's degree or higher. There are a number of supporting occupations in which training requires certificates or associates degrees. The main training provider in the area is the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley.
- Construction - demand for construction will significantly increase due to the anticipated establishment and construction of three LNG plants and Space X. Community colleges and career schools have a large number of programs that can address this need. Some specialized training needs to be developed.
- Manufacturing - demand for manufacturing will become more prominent due to the anticipated establishment of three LNG plants and a precision machining/manufacturing plant. High technology positions in manufacturing are expected, such as CNC programmers and operators.

There are a number of training strategies that WFS Cameron will explore in our attempt to meet the needs of employers. Existing barriers and challenges such as low literacy levels, low post secondary attainment levels, must be addressed prior to or during the training in order for the region to develop a skilled workforce. The following is one of the initiatives that has been implemented to address some of the challenges of the existing workforce:

**Soft skills training** - This program enables participants to learn a combination of interpersonal people skills, social skills, communication skills, character traits, attitudes, and career attributes that enable people to effectively navigate their environment, work well with others, solve problems, think critically, perform well, and achieve their goals with complementing hard skills.

The long-term strategy of the board is to continue developing partnerships, exchanging information, and collaborating in projects to effectively direct workforce activities in the region. The alignment of workforce with economic development has enabled the Board to identify trainings that meet the requirements of employers. With the use of labor market analysis, feedback from our customers and partners, and alignment of resources focused on the needs of the high-growth industries, WFS Cameron will continue to enhance and redirect the services and resources to provide a system of flexible and responsive workforce activities.

Partnerships listed below have been instrumental in cultivating effective workforce development strategies in the Cameron County. These partnerships have enabled WFS Cameron to leverage existing resources to create a stronger, more holistic approach in workforce development. These collaborative efforts have also been critical in obtaining additional funding to increase resources and services in this region. Partnerships with institutions of higher education directly support our

workforce system through the Eligible Training Provider System. Board strategies and initiatives are designed to address basic skills and skill set requirements of local employers.

#### **Educational Partnership:**

- **BISD Adult Education and Literacy** is the AEL provider for Cameron County. BISD offers English as a Second Language (ESL), Adult Basic Education (ABE), Adult Secondary Education (ASE) and English Literacy and Civics classes. Partnership with this provider has strengthened since BISD is the AEL provider and core partner of the workforce system. Regular meetings are held to discuss issues and challenges of the population as well as the referral process. WFS Cameron provides on-site trainings in soft skills, financial literacy, LMCI tools, job readiness, and career and college awareness trainings to the AEL participants on a scheduled basis.
- **Literacy Providers** such as BISD AEL provider and Brownsville Adult Literacy Center provide English as a Second Language (ESL) and other literacy programs for our mutual customers. The board has entered into MOUs to establish an efficient referral process between agencies and sharing of information and resources.
- **United Way of Southern Cameron County** was established to bring the surrounding communities, including Brownsville, Los Fresnos, Laguna Vista, and Port Isabel, together to find and address local issues education, healthcare, and financial stability. The partnership between this agency and WFS Cameron has assisted parents, who have children enrolled in child care centers, Head Start facilities, or school districts, gain the skills and knowledge needed to ensure their preschool-aged children are ready for kindergarten. The Director of the Child Care Program currently serves on the Early Childhood Education Taskforce and the Executive Director serves on Partners for Postsecondary Success Grant Leadership Team and Policy Committee.
- **Texas School Ready (TSR) Project**, funded by the Children’s Learning Institute at The University of Texas Health Science – Houston, is a comprehensive preschool teacher training program that combines a research-based, state-adopted curriculum with ongoing professional development and progress monitoring. Participating in the program are teachers from the county’s child care center providers, N.I.N.O.S Head Start Program, and school districts. The project’s goal is to work with these teachers, to improve their instructional practices in the classroom, helping more children to be better prepared for kindergarten.
- **GED Providers** offer GED instruction and preparation as well as career pathway information and financial literacy instruction through a collaborative effort with workforce center contractor. WFS Cameron supports the classroom instruction of job seekers through these providers to increase the educational level of residents of Cameron County.
- **Independent School Districts** have a long history of collaboration with the Board. The ISDs are familiar with the workforce services and provide information to students about the workforce system. ISDs also utilize workforce data and information on targeted and demand occupations for career planning and pathway selection based on labor market information. WFS Cameron has provided Career & Technical Education (CTE)

departments with our Soft Skills Course to be infused into their CTE programs and labor market tools such as the Reality Check and Lifestyle Calculator. Additionally, a number of school districts offer high school recovery programs in an effort to increase the completion attainment rate and employment prospects for youths in Cameron County.

- **YouthBuild** through Community Development Corporation of Brownsville (CDCB) has been collaborating with WFS Cameron for many years. Youthbuild provides workforce program information to their participants and assists in the coordination of resources. The workforce center in turn provides referrals to Youthbuild for GED instruction and training opportunities in residential construction.
- **Lower Rio Grande Valley P-16 Council** advances regional efforts to target, design and implement systemic actions to establish college-going habits and traditions in middle and high schools. They were also created to increase awareness of College and Career Readiness Standards. WFS Cameron is a member of the council and provides workforce data and information as needed.
- **Economic Development Councils** collaborate with WFS Cameron for information sharing and workforce development. The Board serves on the Brownsville EDC, and is a member of the Harlingen, San Benito, Port Isabel, and South Padre Island EDC's. The Board provides EDCs with labor market information that will assist them in setting initiatives and goals, as well as utilizing this information for inclusion in grant opportunities and the attraction of potential new businesses to the area.
- **Institutions of Higher Education** have been collaborating with WFS Cameron for many years through the Eligible Training Provider (ETP) Certification system. The newest addition to the partnership list is The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV). The creation will bring the university opportunities to access Permanent University Funding (PUF), in addition to the numerous undergraduate and graduate degrees.

In addition to the strategies cited above, WFS Cameron evaluates economic development activities to ensure labor market projections are aligned with emerging and existing industry sectors. The following strategies have been implemented in support of the development and growth of the local and regional economy.

- **Space X** will establish a rocket launch facility in Cameron County as well as a STARGATE research facility. The company plans on establishing a plant close to the launching site to build rockets that will also create economic growth in the region. The company is projecting to hire up to 150 employees in high technology, high wage jobs. WFS Cameron has begun collaborating with this company by providing specialized testing to determine the skill sets of existing job seekers in specific welding positions.
- **The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Medical School** will increase the growth of the healthcare industry in Cameron County. The establishment of this medical school will not only impact healthcare in the region, but will contribute to the growth in the hospitality and retail industry. WFS Cameron continues to partner with UTRGV through ETP for a number of undergraduate programs.

- **Two of three Liquid Nitrogen Gas (LNG) companies** are at the final stage of the environmental study waiting for the results of the report to establish plants at the Port of Brownsville. The approval and subsequent establishment of these companies will bring hundreds of employment opportunities in construction, chemical manufacturing, and logistics. WFS Cameron has begun collaborating with company representative by hosting stakeholder meetings to identify skill set requirements for the anticipated workforce that will lead to instructional programing that will satisfy their workforce needs.
- **SATA USA** is bringing hundreds of employment opportunities in precision manufacturing to Cameron County. WFS Cameron is working with the company to facilitate the recruitment and training for skilled workers for the various high tech positions with this company. The board is also working with training providers to identify funding for the development of training programs to meet the needs of this employer, and a TWC Skills Development Fund grant has been filed to assist the company with training needs.

In order for us to do a more holistic approach, other partnerships that strengthen the workforce system include:

- **Vocational Rehabilitation Services** is now under the umbrella of the Texas Workforce Commission. They are a Core Partner. VRS will be instrumental in providing support and training opportunities to individuals with a disability, including youths. WFS Cameron has collaborated with VRS on the integration of services, and will continue to provide adaptive technology requirements to ensure workforce center resources are accessible to this population. A newly hired Board staff, Student HireAbility Navigator will assist VR in outreach and promotion of Pre-ETS services to youth with disabilities.
- **Regional Transportation Advisory Panel (RTAP)** provides a platform for collaborative approaches to transit planning for seamless and efficient movement of people in the region. The RTAP was able to successfully apply and secure funding from TXDOT to implement a Bus Transit Training Academy to meet the need for transit bus drivers. WFS Cameron is an active member of this panel and continues to provide information and resources as needed.
- **Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)** representative uses a designated partners' workstation at the workforce centers on a part-time basis to provide employment and training opportunities for seniors in the area. Seniors benefit from SCSEP presence at the workforce centers to enable them to obtain information on workforce center services and resources as well.
- **Migrant Education & Training (MET)** Program's goal is to ensure that all migrant students reach challenging academic standards and graduate with a high school diploma (or complete a GED) that prepares them for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment. WFS Cameron continuously collaborates with MET to serve the Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFWs). It enables MSFWs to access additional training and work experience opportunities.

- **Workforce Solutions Lower Rio** continues to collaborate on special initiatives with WFS Cameron, such as Project Grow and other grant awards. Training opportunities were provided to teachers in surrounding school districts through contracted services from Workforce Solutions of Lower Rio. This initiative enabled WFS Cameron to fund teacher internship programs to make counselors and teachers more aware of business/ industry expectations as well as careers in a variety of industries sectors.

## Part B: Operational Elements

### The Operational Elements

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

#### **Board Response:**

WFS Cameron operates under the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA). This Act allows us to provide fully integrated workforce investment activities through statewide and local workforce development systems that increase employment, retention, and earnings of participants, and increase attainment of recognized postsecondary credentials by participants, and, as a result, improve the quality of the workforce, reduce welfare dependency, increase economic self-sufficiency, meet the skills requirements of employers, and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the Nation.

There are “Core Program” partners under WIOA, as well as “One-Stop Partners”.

#### Core Program Partners

- WIOA Adult
- WIOA Dislocated worker
- WIOA Youth
- Adult Education & Literacy
- Wagner-Peyser Employment Service
- Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

Not all these partners are co-located within the centers. Those that are co-located, along with One-Stop Partners are as follows:

#### Core Partners

- WIOA Adult
- WIOA Dislocated worker
- WIOA Youth
- Wagner-Peyser Employment Service

#### One-Stop Partners

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment & Training (SNAP E&T)
- CHOICES Non-Custodial Parent
- Veteran’s Employment Services / Texas Veteran’s Leadership Program (LVLP)
- Trade Adjustment Act (TAA)
- Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFW)
- Child Care Services
- Senior Community Service Employment Program

WFS Cameron has entered into Memorandums of Understanding and or contract with the following Core / One-Stop Partners:

- Adult Education and Literacy (WIOA, Title II) with Brownsville Independent School District (BISD)
- Texas Veterans Commission
- Apprenticeship Programs
- Senior Community Service Employment Program

The Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 provides an increased focus on the academic achievement of career and technical education students, strengthens the connections between secondary and postsecondary education, and improves state and local accountability. WFS Cameron strives to fully support the academic and Career Technical Education (CTE) skills of secondary education students and postsecondary students who elect to enroll in CTE programs of study. To support the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, WFS Cameron has entered into MOUs with the following entities:

- Brownsville ISD
- Harlingen CISD
- La Villa ISD
- Texas State Technical College Harlingen
- Texas Southmost College
- Housing Authority of the City of Brownsville
- Housing Authority of the City of Harlingen
- Alabama-Caushata Indian Tribal Council Employment & Training Program
- Preparation for Adult Living Program / Child Protective Services
- Youthbuild Program`
- Senior Texans Employment Program

It is through these existing and new partnerships that WFS Cameron will support the strategy identified in the State Plan and work with the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs. Post-Secondary partners are linked to the workforce system via Eligible Training Provider (ETP) system.

2. *A description of how the Board will work with entities carrying out core programs to:*
  - a. *expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment;*
  - b. *facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs; and*
  - c. *improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable).*

**Board Response:**

WFS Cameron Board staff will collaborate with our Contractor and educational provider partners to provide a full array of employment and training opportunities to our job seekers, incumbent workers, and students in all of the core program areas. Our Workforce Centers provide employment services, individualized career services, training programs, and activities tailored to service the needs of WIOA-eligible in-school and out-of-school youth.

Contractor staff at the Workforce Centers will determine customer eligibility for core program assistance through outreach, intake, information services, and appropriate assessments. Employment services will then be offered to the customer. These services include job matching in the Center resource labs, assistance in utilization of WorkInTexas.com, resume building assistance, exposure to LMCI tools for career planning, and staff determination of appropriate and allowable support services to be provided.

Individualized career services to be offered by Contractor staff include assessments, counseling and career planning, development of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP), soft skills training, financial literacy training, and work experiences as appropriate.

For those core program customers who cannot be immediately placed in employment, training services ranging from GED, subsidized employment, customized training, or formal occupational skills training are offered to fit the customers' needs and abilities. The level of training offered is determined by Contractor staff based upon the customer's education, past work experience, assessments, and their Individual Employment Plan (IEP). Some customers qualify for and receive support services during their training and for up to twelve (12) months after starting employment. Youth customers will receive this follow up support regardless of the reason for program completion.

For WIOA youth customers who are facing challenges and barriers to success, WFS Cameron collaborates with its partner network to provide the 14 WIOA Youth Elements, as appropriate for each youth customer. These Elements include:

- Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to a high school diploma or its recognized equivalent or postsecondary credential;
- Alternative secondary school services or dropout recovery services;
- Paid and unpaid work experiences that have academic and occupational education as a component, such as summer and non-seasonal employment, pre-apprenticeship

programs, internships and job shadowing, and on-the-job-training, in the private for-profit or nonprofit sectors;

- Occupational skills training, which includes priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials in in-demand industries or occupations in the local area;
- Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation;
- Leadership development opportunities, including community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors;
- Support services, such as linkages to community services, assistance with transportation, child and dependent care, assistance with housing, needs-related payments, assistance with educational testing, reasonable accommodations for youth with disabilities, referrals to health care, and assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and tools;
- Adult mentoring for at least 12 months;
- Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after completing participation;
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling, such as drug and alcohol abuse, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate;
- Financial literacy education;
- Entrepreneurial skills training;
- Services providing labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services; and
- Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training.

Foster Youth: WFS Cameron works closely with the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) agency to help foster youth and those children aging out of foster care move toward independent living through successful employment. The Board also provides funding for an annual Foster Youth Resource Fair that will bring awareness on the foster youth program and services available to foster youth, as well as provide a platform for the development of leadership and enhancement of soft skills for foster youth, especially those “aging out”.

We are continuously enhancing our existing services to determine how we can better serve the residents of Cameron County. We have two full-service centers within the area that provide all services available within our operation. We have two satellite locations that provides employment services as needed and a Mobile Unit that travels throughout our County, especially rural areas, where it is more challenging for job seekers to visit one of our full-service centers. The Mobile Unit is operated by very knowledgeable staff, able to provide employment services on wheels. We have partnerships with over seventy entities throughout Cameron County, with agencies, public entities, and businesses that allow our Mobile Unit to station itself at their facility, providing services to the community.

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

#### ***Board Response:***

Workforce Solutions Cameron (WFS Cameron) ensures coordination of programs and services for targeted populations through collaborative efforts outlined in Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) or Contracts in place with appropriate entities. WFS Cameron target populations includes Veterans, Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers, and Foster Youth.

#### ***Veterans***

Upon entry to the WFS Cameron Workforce Centers, customers are asked about Veteran status, and once identified, they receive one-on-one services from Employment Services staff members. Veterans are made aware of all center programs and services on a one-on-one basis or during ongoing group orientations. If the veteran expresses interest in any other program, they are scheduled to see a career counselor. Disabled veterans are given “priority” to all available center services.

WFS Cameron participates in the state-wide initiative job fair, Hiring Red, White & You, designed to connect Texas Veterans with Employers, utilizing their various skills and abilities. The Business Services Unit (BSU) and Veteran staff members participate in other job fairs and hiring events where contact is made with employers, who are made aware of the benefits and advantages of hiring veterans.

The Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) offers employment services to Texas veterans and helps employers find qualified veteran job applicants. TVC-Employment Services provides sound job coaching and pathways to overcome employment barriers. In conjunction with assisting Veterans, Veterans Employment staff communicate with and assist employers to understand the unique benefits involved with hiring Texas Veterans. TVC staff are assigned to the two WFS Cameron full-service workforce centers, which are located within the two largest cities in Cameron County: Brownsville and Harlingen. The TVC staff offer one-on-one assistance with job applications, resume preparation, job matching and searches, as well as other intensive services. Intensive services are offered to disabled veterans and veterans with barriers to employment, including, but not limited to, homelessness, and economically or educationally disadvantaged veterans with other barriers to employment.

#### ***Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers***

WFS Cameron continues to support efforts to outreach and serve Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFW). In order to adequately outreach this target population, two part-time MSFW program staff are assigned to Cameron County. One staff member is assigned to northern Cameron county and the other staff member is assigned to southern Cameron county. Staff either conducts outreach at the workforce center by identifying applicants at the time of registration or by outreaching MSFW customers where they live and work. Since the purpose of the MSFW program is to take available services directly to the workers, staff collaborates and forges partnerships throughout the community for outreach and service delivery. These outreach efforts includes partnerships with local school districts within the school themselves via school counselors and through the parental involvement programs.

Additionally, MSFW staff coordinates with the Board’s Mobile Resource Unit to outreach migrant workers in the surrounding area in locations where the mobile unit is scheduled to be located. This practice enables MSFW staff to offer one-stop services within the migrant workers’ community, remove transportation as a barrier, increase knowledge of social and workforce services, and offer access to technology / self-service.

MSFW Staff are able to provide the following information to migrant workers during outreach to the various communities and partner agencies:

- Acquisition of literacy, basic education, and the workplace skills necessary to meet workplace requirements,
- Acquisition of occupational skills necessary to meet workplace skills necessary to meet workplace employment,
- Acquisition of knowledge, skills and abilities necessary to make the transition into meaningful, challenging, and productive careers for MSFW youth,
- Understand and use the automated self service delivery system,
- Access labor market information on existing and emerging high-demand occupations,
- Access local, state, and nationwide job openings,
- Referrals to educational and skills training services, and
- Information on and referrals to support services, including subsidized child care, transportation, and financial assistance.

Outreach efforts are guided through the identification of Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and/or other entities in communities where migrants or migrant families tend to congregate. In order to maximize outreach efforts, MSFW staff will attempt to locate and provide services to migrants and migrant families in a group setting. Additionally, MSFW staff will attend national conferences such as the National Farm Workers (MAFO) Conference held on an annual basis to learn strategies used in other communities to engage MSFW customers.

### ***Foster Youth***

Foster Youth face many hurdles growing up as they transition between homes, with hopes of becoming productive adults. Foster Youth are part of the court system that makes decisions for the youth, in the best interest for the youth. With thousands of youth in foster care in the state of Texas, WFS Cameron has strived to maintain relationships with the local court system, to better serve Foster Youth in Cameron County. This includes working with youth that are “aging out” of foster care.

Strategies in place to increase services provided to foster youth include:

- Priority of services for One-Stop Center services.
- Foster Youth Conference connecting foster youth to resource agencies in the community and to provide a learning environment via motivational speaker.

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

- a. To facilitate engagement of employers in the workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations***

- b. *To support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area*
- c. *To better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development*
- d. *To strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs*

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

**Board Response:**

To facilitate engagement of employers in the workforce development programs, which includes small employers and employers in-demand industry sectors and occupations, WFS Cameron has created a Business Services Unit (BSU). The BSU has established successful partnerships with the neighboring boards, chambers of commerce, and economic development councils to enhance the relationship with the employer community. The BSU collaborates on various projects, from job fairs in targeted industries to employer forums, to showcase various program activities. These partnerships have been instrumental in providing an avenue to collect information regarding the needs of the employers. Board staff also organize and facilitate Employer Forums to discuss Workforce needs, and serve as members of Economic Development Councils (EDCs), Chambers of Commerce, and collective impact groups like RGV Lead, RGV Focus, RSTEC, United Brownsville, and Partners for Post-Secondary success.

As part of the workforce center system, the BSU is the liaison between workforce center staff and employers. Since multiple activities within the various workforce programs are employer driven, WFS Cameron created this unit to meet the different needs of targeted populations. The Board utilizes a variety of techniques to market different programs and services to employers, job seekers, and the public. Employers are considered a primary customer of the BSU and staff aggressively outreach employers that are not part of the workforce system to provide information on the array of services available through the workforce center and its partners. Once the BSU is aware of a new employer in the region, they begin building a relationship by:

- Contacting them by phone or email to arrange for a personal visit,
- Going on-site to establish contact,
- Presenting specific information on all of services, programs, and special employer initiatives,
- Engaging in two-way dialogue to find out what their current and projected unmet needs are,
- Coordinating Workforce Center visits to see the availability of interview rooms and conference room for their use;
- Referring to other programs and sources of information, such as the TWC Skills Development Fund,

- Following up after a specified period of time to see how things are progressing, and
- Including them on email listings to provide information on upcoming Job Expos.

Continued interaction with employers allows the BSU to explain screening and assessment services, available employer tax credits, sources of training providers, grants available through other funding sources, and the vast array of past, current and projected Labor Market Information. The BSU makes presentations at monthly Chamber of Commerce meetings and Economic Development Corporation Meetings to highlight various employer initiatives available.

In order to effectively coordinate multiple programs, the Board uses a variety of methods to market services to the general public, including direct mail, ads in local newspapers, newsletters, social media, web page, presentations, hosting special events and coordination with other agencies. Most employer initiatives are designed to target all workforce center participants as well as job seekers. Outreach efforts include:

- Contacting customers by phone, regular mail, or email to arrange for a personal visit,
- Inviting them to the Workforce Centers to receive Job Search Assistance,
- Inviting them to attend Workforce Center orientation for explanation of services,
- Providing job matches based on their profile,
- Referral to other programs and sources of information,
- Following up and continued services to update work applications, and
- Provide information on upcoming Job Expos through email distributions.

The BSU is the center point for employer information and is provided with resources to ensure the community recognizes WFS Cameron in the area of economic development in terms of training / employment opportunities. The updated local labor market studies and labor market data provide the BSU with opportunity to collaboratively develop strategies with the economic development community, chamber of commerce, academic institutions and city leaders.

Products and strategies currently used for the employers include:

- WorkInTexas.com for job postings, job applicant screening, job matching and other employer related services;
- Labor Market Information through the BSU;
- Employer Forums are conducted throughout the year. Surveys/Evaluations are conducted for the purpose of identifying needs of the employer community; and
- Job Fairs are coordinated to current employers, new companies entering the area and for special populations such as the Veterans and foster youth.

Additionally, the Mobile Resource Unit is utilized for companies who request on-site assistance in the form of upgrading computer skills to meet new work requirements, instruction for increasing literacy and other services, and for Rapid Response in the event of a layoff. The Mobile Resource Unit is equipped with the latest technology, wireless capabilities, computer stations and educational software.

The BSU works directly with employers to introduce opportunities to employer special populations (i.e. TANF) and stressing the benefits (i.e. capitalize on tax credits) of hiring WFS Cameron target populations. Utilizing input from employers, WFS Cameron collaborates with educational training providers to determine whether there is any opportunity to facilitate training for a multiple number of individuals in high-targeted and demand occupations. This provision will allow exploration of direct contracts with institutions of higher education and other eligible training providers to increase the number of customized training classes that meet the need of targeted and demand occupations. This is especially important in coordinating employers' needs with the available pool of workers from multiple programs.

WFS Cameron, through the Business Service Unit, will continue to survey existing employers to identify gaps in the training for specific job skills for high growth industries and to enhance current job skills of the incumbent and unemployed worker. This information will be used to work with the education institutions and other training providers to identify short term training, customized training, and on-the-job training opportunities to address the skills needed to ensure workforce skills training is in alignment and consistent with employers' manpower needs. This strategy will continue to provide opportunity to quickly upgrade skills for under-skilled adults in various programs. Additionally, the BSU collaborates with entities such as the Chamber of Commerce and Economic Development Councils to provide information on workforce programs initiatives and funding opportunities to their constituents. Local labor market studies and data provide the BSU with the opportunity to collaboratively develop and build on multiple program strategies with the economic development community, chambers of commerce, academic institutions, and city leaders to better align and leverage resources. The BSU and other Workforce Center staff coordinate to provide the under-skilled individuals identified through the center with opportunities to enhance their work skills through training providers.

WFS Cameron strives to strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs through various practices. By strengthening these linkages, customers in the Unemployment Insurance (UI) Program have the opportunity to return to work faster than anticipated and gain employment with employers that can utilize their recent work history, thus providing a positive impact on the UI Program.

All our center staff are able to provide general information to customers about the Unemployment Insurance (UI) Program. Identified staff then outreach customers receiving UI benefits to attend an orientation, where additional information on services available is provided and an employment plan is created for each customer.

Additional services to customers receiving UI benefits, includes, but is not limited to making space available with a telephone within the resource room area, and a fax machine, to enable the customers to call and/or submitting paperwork requested by the UI department.

For Rapid Response services, in addition to the work performed by the BSU, coordinated efforts are made with the Texas Workforce Commission Unemployment Insurance (TWC UI) area representatives. Once the TWC UI area representative is notified, the following steps taken may include them performing a visit to our area, to speak with affected employees. The TWC UI representative can educate the affected employees on the UI program and answer any questions they may have.

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

**Board Response:**

WFS Cameron officials on both the Board and Contractor now serve on a variety of regional economic development councils, regional and local chambers of commerce, community and technical college Advisory Committees, and collective impact councils which actively engage in research, planning, collaboration, and implementation of a wide variety of workforce activities, including entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services, job fairs, social engagement initiatives, internship engagement, business recruitment, expansion, and retention efforts. Membership and participation in these organizations means lending them the advantage of WFS Cameron LMCI research data, providing them available training options for new businesses, alerting them to TWC and other grant opportunities to assist their causes, such as the Skills for Small Business (SSB) Initiative and Skills Development Fund (SDF) opportunities from TWC, and lending an experienced level of advice on appropriate training programs or social impact programs being discussed for the region.

Entrepreneurial/Microenterprise Services: Cameron County residents benefit from a variety of business development assets, including an active Small Business Administration (SBA) presence, the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) Small Business Development Center, local Chambers of Commerce, and a new Women’s Business Training Center. All of these WFS Cameron partner entities engage in the delivery of entrepreneurial training courses and programs for startups, as well as advice and council on business growth and expansion planning and implementation for burgeoning small businesses, and WFS Cameron works alongside them with the delivery of workforce services as needed by their employees and/or customers. WFS Cameron also sponsors the Texas Small Business Forums and Texas Business Conferences at various locations across the County on an annual basis, both of which assist small business owners in staying current with hiring and other legal issues of business ownership. The WFS Cameron Business Services Unit (BSU) actively participates with all local Chamber events targeting entrepreneurs and microenterprises, and strives to offer all of our services and support to their business customers as they visit with them, and actively promotes coordination between agencies and their support products, as well as advertising these agency partner services in printed and social media outreach materials.

Partner agencies related to entrepreneurship and microenterprise support are:

- UTRGV Small Business Development Center
- TSTC Harlingen
- Texas Southmost College
- Small Business Administration (SBA)
- Brownsville Chamber of Commerce
- Harlingen Chamber of Commerce
- San Benito Chamber of Commerce
- Rio Grande Valley Partnership
- Texas Governor’s Small Business Forum
- Texas Business Conference

6. *A description of the one-stop delivery system in the local area, including explanations of the following:*

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

**Board Response:**

WFS Cameron will ensure that all eligible providers including contracted entities carry out their duties consistent with applicable federal and state laws, regulation and other requirements. Through continuous monitoring of eligible providers, the board will ensure that workforce programs and services support the goals and strategies of the Workforce Solutions Development Board Plan, as well as all Board policies, directives, and agreements.

WFS Cameron strives to ensure the workforce system is a responsive system that prepares participants for high demand occupations through the program and services offerings. Reviews are continuously performed to determine if providers are meeting the employment needs of local employers, job seekers, and workers. The workforce system is a result oriented and outcome based system that enables the boards to assess the performance of all system providers and partners.

The two main systems that are used to collect and evaluate system data are the Texas Workforce Information System of Texas (TWIST) and WorkInTexas.com. Participant information, such as participant characteristics, service activities and outcomes, is captured through both of these systems. This data is available for continuous analysis of the service delivery of the workforce system including provider performance. System partners have the ability to access the job matching system (WIT) to conduct matches and review the responsiveness of the workforce system in meeting both employer and job seeker needs. The workforce center utilizes these systems to identify opportunities for improvement and redirection of program funds, as well as evaluate eligible providers of the system.

Additionally, customer feedback is collected at different times throughout an individual's participation in an effort to obtain information on the workforce system delivery as well as contracted services which may involve system partners such as eligible training providers. Customer feedback is critical in collecting quantifiable information regarding the system's efficiency and effectiveness in serving all system participants.

The board collects both formal and informal customer feedback to determine the efficiency of the workforce system. There are different points during workforce participation for both job seekers and employers that allow workforce staff to obtain input. This process allows staff to capture informal feedback on programs, services, and activities. Formal customer feedback is collected through workforce surveys, event surveys, and during monitoring visits. All of the customers in the workforce systems provide essential information to enable WFS Cameron staff to improve service delivery as the participants navigate through the system.

WFS Cameron obtains input from the following customer groups:

**Employer feedback** - Employers are a primary customer of the workforce system. Their feedback is essential in order to identify and better link workforce training with employer demand.

**Jobseeker feedback** - Jobseekers are another primary customer of the workforce system. Feedback provides critical information on services and activities to effectively prepare them to meet employer expectations. .

**Community Partner feedback** - System partners are essential in the workforce system. Partners may include school districts, CBOs, IHEAS, cities, collective impact groups, Chambers of Commerce and training providers. Feedback provides information on improving partner linkage to the system and effectively leveraging limited resources.

**Internal Customers/Staff feedback** - Staff is a critical component of the workforce system. Feedback is constantly sought through interviews and exit polls to analyze the delivery system.

WFS Cameron continuously evaluates system performance both formally and informally in order to build an effective network of program activities. Formal performance evaluations are conducted through Monitoring Reports and reports generated on performance targets and benchmarks. Performance outcomes are used as a tool to determine the effectiveness of the services and activities of the system.

WFS Cameron maintains two (2) full service centers and one (1) satellite center throughout Cameron County to ensure residents have access to workforce services. Staffing levels are dictated by customer flow and utilization of center services, which are constantly analyzed. This analysis not only helps the Board determine the efficiency of the system operations, but it also enables the board to determine if the centers are meeting the demands of the community. Additionally, the board has a large Mobile Resource Unit that provides workforce services throughout the rural parts of the county. This one-stop shop on wheels ensures access is available to everyone in the county.

WFS Cameron also utilizes its web-based resources as "virtual centers" in order for customers to obtain information on services and activities of the workforce system including, but not limited to, eligibility, program services, employer services, labor market information, and special events.

Linkages to state and federal resources are also provided on the website. The most important system that the board highlights and promotes is the WorkinTexas.com. Since this is an online system, it is the most effective means by which to access workforce services. Center staff are able to run matches between job seekers and employers and convey this information to individuals on a timely basis.

WFS Cameron utilizes social media to immediately deliver workforce information to a large number of users of all ages and backgrounds. The board is able to capitalize on these cost effective resources to outreach larger number of individuals that do not normally frequent the workforce centers. Users targeted include job seekers, employers, workforce partners, as well as targeted populations and any other customer groups that need information on workforce services. WFS Cameron hosts a Facebook page, Twitter account, YouTube and LinkedIn account.

All of the workforce centers and satellite offices are strategically located to enable county residents to access workforce services. The Board and VRS have developed a strong partnership throughout the years by working together to identify and improve center accessibility. Now, as a core partner, VRS staff will be co-located in our workforce centers and will undoubtedly provide unlimited information and resources for all workforce participants. The Student HireAbility Navigator will work closely with VR to ensure the availability of Pre-ETS services are communicated to students with disabilities.

As we strive to meet the needs of our disabled population and facilitate their entry into the workforce, WFS Cameron observes and follows TWC's policy noted below to ensure compliance in serving customers with disabilities:

- WD Letter 08-08, Implementation of the New Integrated Complaints, Hearings, and Appeal Rules
- WD Letter 18-07, Change 1 Discrimination Complaint Procedures
- WD Letter 24-01, Prohibition Against Discrimination Based on Disability or Limited English Proficiency in the Administration of Workforce Services
- WD Letter 57-07, Interpreter Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Individuals
- Technical Assistance Bulletin 225, Customers Requiring Relay Services

Our two main WFS Cameron Workforce Centers in Brownsville and Harlingen are, and will remain, ADA (Americans with Disability Amendments Act of 2008) and Americans with Disability Act) compliant. All center customers have access to all services offered at each of our full-service centers, as well as our satellite offices, regardless of disability.

The two main WFS Cameron Workforce Centers are equipped with:

#### Computers

- Screen magnification software
- Screen reading software
- "Expert Mouse" trackballs
- Large Print Keyboard

#### Telephones

- TTY phone
- Telephone handset amplifier
- Video Relay Services

Printed Material

- Large print
- Braille

WFS Cameron provides accommodations to assist people with disabilities through the following:

- Access to services, which may include provision of readers, interpreters, and other auxiliary aids necessary for participating as effectively as other customers;
- Modifications or adjustments to the structure or essential functions of the aid, benefit, service or training that does not compromise the performance criteria or outcomes.
- Modifications or adjustments to the manner in which a training program is conducted, or the provision of auxiliary aids necessary for participating as effectively as people who do not have disabilities.

When a job applicant is referred to an employment opportunity, everyone involved (i.e., the employer customer, the job applicant customer, center staff) understands that it is the employer’s responsibility to make a hiring decision from a range of candidates. When job applicants are pre-screened, center staff refers the requested number of applicants base on employer requirements and job seeker qualification regardless of job applicants’ disabilities.

WFS Cameron will continue building on mutually beneficial partnerships with other community organizations that also serve the disabled community, such as United Way of Southern Cameron County, VAIL, Easter Seals, and DADS. In addition to these key partnerships, WFS Cameron is now an Employer Network (EN) for the Social Security Administrations’ “Ticket to Work” program.

The roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners will be integrated into the existing set-up once the co-location of between WFS Cameron and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services takes place. The co-location will enable staff to be readily available to provide the needed services to customers and will allow for enhancements on our services available, especially to the disabled population.

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

**Board Response:**

WFS Cameron is committed to stronger skill assessments of adult and dislocated job seekers which clearly targets skill gaps, trains for necessary skill deficiencies within the targeted occupations, and helps ensure that we are sending qualified job applicants to Cameron County employers. Qualification of occupational skills is becoming the norm among many industries, and the Board’s Business Services Unit and Contractor will work to acquire employer skill assessment tools and pre-screen applicants to be used as part of our assessment process. This assessment will verify that an individual has the essential skills, knowledge, and abilities to determine the fit between the individuals’ existing skills, interests and values to the targeted industries and occupations. The assessment will also identify whether an individual who is

exploring new career options in the targeted occupations is suitable for the working conditions, environment or job demands of the targeted industries and the targeted & demand occupations.

The types of training available include occupational skills training, programs that combine workplace training with related instruction, skills upgrading and retraining, entrepreneurial training, job readiness training, and adult education and literacy activities provided in combination with occupational skills training. Specific occupations are targeted annually within targeted industry clusters. This List of Targeted Occupations is compiled and made available to training providers seeking to provide training services through the Eligible Training Provider System (ETPS). The Board has developed a system for the review and approval of training programs based on this approved list, as well as other local and state requirements under ETP.

If minimal responses are received from annual solicitation, and it is determined that there are insufficient numbers of eligible training providers in the local area that can provide specialized training services, an RFP would be issued by the Board for this specialized training. This process would enable the Board to solicit other providers that could offer these services through contractual agreements.

WFS Cameron implemented various strategies to address the employment and training needs of basic skills deficient customers, as well as our Limited English Proficient population. One of those strategies includes the expansion of training offerings by procuring adult education and literacy activities coupled with occupational skills training. Participants would be able to simultaneously acquire occupational skills training while attempting to increase their basic skills levels. Limited English Proficient individuals would be able to learn a second language while acquiring occupational skills training. Other trainings procured include job readiness, Career Pathway/GED, and financial literacy training to enable workforce participants to acquire “soft skills” (work readiness) training in preparation for entrance into the workforce.

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

***Board Response:***

WFS Cameron coordinates workforce investment activities with Rapid Response activities through the Business Services Unit. Representatives from this unit partake in the delivery of rapid response activities. Within 48 hours of a layoff, a WARN notice, a public announcement of a layoff, or notification that a Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) petition has been filed, designated staff establishes contact with the employer(s) and/or representatives of affected workers to assess employer and employee early intervention needs. These early intervention services are provided to enable affected workers to transition to new employment as quickly as possible.

In addition to immediate and on-site contact with the employer, other rapid response services provided include development of a coordinated response to the dislocation event, and emergency assistance adapted to the particular closing, layoff, or disaster. Once contact is made with the employer, Board staff makes initial contact with state unemployment insurance (UI) officials to inform them of the layoff and to arrange for a UI staff personnel to serve as the local

contact and designee for on-site meetings to discuss UI benefits. Board staff, along with the Business Services Unit coordinate the schedule for rapid response events.

Board staff ensures required services and activities are conducted in accordance with the requirements for rapid response. Board staff, along with the contractor staff, are responsible for identifying special needs requirements and providing accommodations as necessary in language interpretation, written material, hearing impaired services and/or services for people with disabilities. As a workforce center representative, the Business Services Unit conducts a survey to determine the needs of the affected workers, as well as assists with the registration of workers for rapid response:

The survey enables staff to collect information on the following:

- Individual background information;
- Job information about the position from which they were laid off;
- Future plans / interests / needs; and,
- Satisfaction about the meeting.

The Business Services Unit integrates Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act activities at the rapid response event by incorporating workforce programs and services information at these meetings.

Material and information provided includes, but is not limited to:

- Career counseling and job search assistance,
- Resumé preparation and interviewing assistance,
- Education and training opportunities,
- Labor market information and reemployment prospects,
- Local supportive services (i.e.: legal aid, United Way, faith-based and community organizations, food and clothing banks),
- COBRA and HIPAA (written information),
- Information on 211 services, and
- Other available resources to meet the short and long-term assistance needs of the affected workers.

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

***Board Response:***

Based on studies and requests from area employers, it was determined that a large part of our youth population was lacking in soft skills, job readiness, and direction with career pathways. As a result, WFS Cameron created special projects to assist in providing the youth elements and to strengthen our youth population, while meeting the demands of the employers.

- **Ready, Set, Link!:** WFS Cameron hosts a workshop that provides an overview of the Texas Workforce Commission’s labor market and career and education planning tools. A strong knowledge of how to use the LMCI tools will assist the students in the initial selection of a viable career pathway, orient them to occupations and wage levels within that pathway, and give them a problem solving tool for their use in the future should a career change be required. It is hoped that by knowing how to use the LMCI tools they will be much better equipped to make sound and rational choices and judgments concerning their future.
- **SEEDS:** WFSC Cameron encourages and promotes career exploration and job readiness through its SEEDS (Students Empowered to Explore and Develop Skills) initiative in all school districts in Cameron County. The SEEDS initiative is composed of the following four elements: Career Expos and Fairs, Workshops, Youth Ambassador program, and #MyDreamJob social media campaign. This initiative was implemented in an effort to develop well-informed youth and increase their ability to make conscious decisions about their career pathways for today’s competitive job market. WFS Cameron believes that the SEEDS initiative directly supports a more prepared, more marketable workforce that meets the needs of local employers.
- **Youth Career EXPLORation Fair:** The EXPLO provides students with an opportunity to explore various career paths and ask business professionals questions about what it is like to work in their field and what it takes to succeed there. In addition, post-secondary institutions send representatives to answer students’ questions about the programs their institution offers and how those programs can help students accomplish their career goals. In culmination, these discussions help students to align their educational plans with their career goals, to reinforce the link between educational attainment and future career prospects, to broaden their understanding of a career path, and to understand the skill-sets that are needed for various occupations.
- **Project Phoenix:** Workforce Solutions Cameron (WFS Cameron) has established an MOU with the Cameron County Juvenile Justice Department (CCJJD) to equip students with the information and skills they need to succeed in today’s workforce. Project Phoenix is administered over a 5-month period and will expose students to labor market information, connect the role that education plays in future employment opportunities, and equip students with the professional and personal skills they need to succeed in the workplace. A select group of students have the opportunity to enter into subsidized employment and apply what they have learned. Project Phoenix aims to prepare students to succeed in an academic setting and in today’s workforce.
- **National Retail Federation (NRF) Customer Service & Sales Certification:** WFS Cameron offers this certification for students that are interested in jobs within the retail sector or occupations that require customer service and sales skills.
- **Job Readiness & Soft Skills:** WFS Cameron conducts resume writing, interviewing and soft skills classes for a variety of audiences. The Soft Skills curriculum developed by WFS Cameron has been given to the Career & Technology Education (CTE) programs at several

area high schools to be infused into their CTE curriculums. WFS Cameron initially trains the CTE faculty on how to deliver the curriculum, and the teachers then take this knowledge back to their respective classrooms and develop lesson plans around the soft skills/job readiness topics.

- **All-In:** WFS Cameron conducts interviewing and soft skills classes for the All-In internship program. The All-In Internship Program, funded by the Brownsville EDC and local employer support, creates 90 new paid internship positions for Brownsville postsecondary students in high-demand occupations. These internship positions provide meaningful work assignments and a learning component related to the students' academic major. The Internship Program gives students a competitive edge for high-demand jobs in the WDA by providing them with hands on experience, training, and a network of individuals employed in their fields of study.
- **Education & Career EXPO:** The EXPO is executed in partnership with RGV Lead. RGV Lead is a partnership between education and business that prepares young people for today's skilled workforce. This partnership involves high schools, colleges, and universities, large and small businesses, and government agencies. The EXPO has been held for over thirteen (13) years. It is a community-wide effort by businesses, educators, and community leaders working together to help all high school students prepare for career success. The partners come together to provide students with information about career opportunities available in the Rio Grande Valley and the educational institutions providing programs of study for those careers. The goal of the EXPO is to help our future workforce chart a career course by providing relevant and accurate information.
- **Assistive Services:** With the co-location of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services within the center, all necessary adaptive equipment will be more easily accessible for the youth population, including integration into all existing programs. The Student HireAbility Navigator will work closely with VR to ensure the availability of Pre-ETS services are communicated to students with disabilities.

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

**Board Response:**

WFS Cameron has established working relationships with secondary and postsecondary institutions across the County in a number of initiatives, including membership service on educational program Advisory Committees and assisting both ISDs and CTCs with LMCI data to support their applications for JET and other state and federal grants. WFS Cameron considers these partnerships crucial to the design and function of a well-planned career pathway educational system where initiatives planned by either workforce or the educational partners are coordinated, resources are shared and maximized, and services are unduplicated to the greatest extent possible. Throughout the listing of Career Pathway Partnerships below will be seen the cooperative efforts of our region to develop a seamless career pathway model for our students.

## **Institutions of Higher Education (IHEAs)**

As indicated above, Workforce Solutions Cameron partners with IHEAs to support training initiatives as a result of TWC grant awards. Training opportunities have been developed over the past two years through the skills development and self-sufficiency funds for meeting the needs of local employers. A total of \$1,689,936 has been awarded to local community colleges and other area providers to train 174 job seekers and 733 incumbent workers in the following industry: manufacturing, healthcare, and automotive. Of the total amount noted above, \$1,090,797 was used for the training and upskilling of 552 individuals in the manufacturing industry alone. As the workforce board for Cameron County, we continue to support IHEAs by leveraging resources and providing referrals for the preparation of a skilled workforce.

## **United Way of Southern Cameron County, “Partners for Postsecondary Success (PPS)”**

The PPS initiative, a collective impact project originally funded by the Gates Foundation, is a coalition of leaders from Brownsville ISD, WFS Cameron, Texas State Technical College Harlingen, United Brownsville, BEDC, Brownsville Chamber of Commerce, Texas Southmost College, and UTRGV, with representatives from RGV LEAD and RGV Focus.

Launched with a \$1.5 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and substantial funding from local businesses and individual stakeholders, Partners for Postsecondary Success (PPS) is a partnership working to improve education and create pathways to quality careers. Descriptions of the Task Forces within the Project will illustrate the degree of collaboration and coordination taking place in this effort.

**Data Taskforce** - Charged with creating a data management system and repository of student achievement, labor demand and employment data from multiple sources to move Brownsville toward a culture of evidence in partner organizations and the community at large. This taskforce also develops and distributes a Community Indicator Report on education to spark data-driven discussions about community issues.

**Community Engagement Taskforce** - Responsible for creating and delivering a robust community awareness campaign illustrating the connection between postsecondary credentials and future financial stability for low-income, young adults.

PPS Student Ambassadors are UTRGV college students who return to their local BISD high schools and talk to juniors and seniors about connecting to and succeeding in postsecondary institutions.

**Policies and Practices** - Responsible for strategically aligning partners' institutional policies and practices to PPS goals, including curriculum alignment, a focus on career pathways, programs to increase first-year retention, and increased internship, mentorship and job shadowing opportunities.

**Sustainability Taskforce** - Strengthens the partnership's reach, effectiveness, and sustainability by engaging community leaders, students and other diverse stakeholders to contribute intellectual and financial capital to PPS, and by dedicating additional staff resources.

### **United Way of Southern Cameron County, “All In Project”**

The PPS Project has been now molded into the All-In Project, whereby the community of educators, workforce professionals, city administration, and business leaders commit to continue to plan and work together to support student success through their chosen career pathways. The goal remains “to double the number of young adults in Brownsville who earn postsecondary credentials with labor market value by 2025”.

### **Brownsville EDC, All-In Internship Project**

Recognizing the importance of internships to career pathway success, the Brownsville EDC has funded \$215,000 to the All-In Project to support 90 internship positions for UTRGV and Texas Southmost College. It is hoped that this initiative will be supported in the future by business and industry that profit from these internships, or by WFS Cameron funding initiatives, as appropriate.

### **RGV LEAD, Achieve Texas Career Pathways and Industry Academies**

RGV LEAD is a partnership between education and business that prepares young people for today's skilled workforce. This partnership involves high schools, colleges and universities, large and small businesses, governmental agencies -- all working together! RGV LEAD has been responsible over the past several years in working with ISDs in the region to establish the Achieve Texas model in all high schools. This model works with high schools and colleges to develop articulated and aligned six-year technical degree plans to begin in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade and progress through two years of technical college attainment. It has proven to be a very successful program.

### **Region One Service Center, Teacher Externships**

WFS Cameron and Workforce Solutions Lower Rio in 2015 partnered with Region One Service Center to fund a regional summer Teacher Externship program whereby volunteer HS teachers and counselors are placed in business and industry job sites in order to experience the real world of work. The teachers then develop a lesson plan to take back to their classroom and share their experiences with their students as a method of career awareness and job readiness instruction.

### **RGV Focus**

In 2012, the Rio Grande Valley (RGV) Collective Impact initiative, now RGV FOCUS, launched to transform college readiness, access, and success across the four-county region. Initially founded by a group of district superintendents and higher education presidents, the collaborative has grown to include educators, workforce professionals, nonprofits, community groups, funders, and business and civic leaders dedicated to making major, systemic improvements to educational and career attainment in the RGV.

RGV FOCUS works to strengthen each step of the educational pipeline and align community resources to provide the support structure that learners need to succeed throughout high school and postsecondary in order to pursue a meaningful career in the RGV and beyond.

Since May, 2012, this cross-sector group of leaders – the Leadership Team – has met regularly to identify assets and needs in the RGV, adopt a common vision, and identify shared goals, strategies, and metrics to help drive the following vision:

***All RGV learners will achieve a degree or credential that leads to a meaningful career.***

### **United Brownsville**

United Brownsville (UB) was established in 2010 with the mission to be a catalyst for collaborative action on the vision developed by the Brownsville community in the Imagine Brownsville Comprehensive Plan. Its purpose is to provide an organizational framework for the sustainable collaboration of the public and private sectors, to develop strategies and best management practices, partner and share ideas and resources, build mutual capacities and cooperate in moving our community forward toward its shared vision. Education and workforce development are two cornerstones of this initiative, and WFS Cameron is a member of the Board of Directors.

### **BISD Career & Technical Education Department**

WFS Cameron has been working for the past two years to train BISD and other county ISD Career and Technical (CTE) faculty and counselors in the use of the TWC website LMCI functions, with the hope that these teachers will integrate this training into their CTE classes.

A knowledge of how to use Reality Check, Texas Cares, Texas CREWS, and the other applications on the TWC website, along with the LMI job data functions can serve the students in career pathway determination, as well as assist them later in life when their careers may change and need to be redirected. WFS Cameron has also given BISD and other schools full access to our Soft Skills curriculum for infusion into their CET courses, and has begun to offer Financial Literacy, Job Readiness, and College Awareness Training to ISD faculties and student groups.

### **AEL Integration, BISD as Contractor**

WFS Cameron works closely with the region's AEL Contractor (BISD Adult Continuing Education Center) to provide integrated training and workforce services to their AEL participants. Job readiness skills such as Soft Skills, Financial Literacy, Interviewing, Resumé Development, and Job Search are provided on-site at several external locations.

### **Texas Southmost College**

In 2014, Texas Southmost College ended its 20-year partnership agreement with the University of Texas at Brownsville (UTB) and is now in the process of rebuilding its infrastructure and programs to meet the needs of its service delivery area. WFS Cameron is working closely with college administration to assist in providing LMI data for justification of technical programs, and also for submission of JET and Skills Development grants to assist their partnership activities with area business and industry, and with their area ISDs. Matching of viable programs of study, articulated and aligned from high school CTE to AAS degrees and Certificates is a prime area of concern for the administration so that resources are maximized. Also, TSC administration plans to fully service the technical education needs of the area workforce as new and emerging industries make relocation decisions favoring our area.

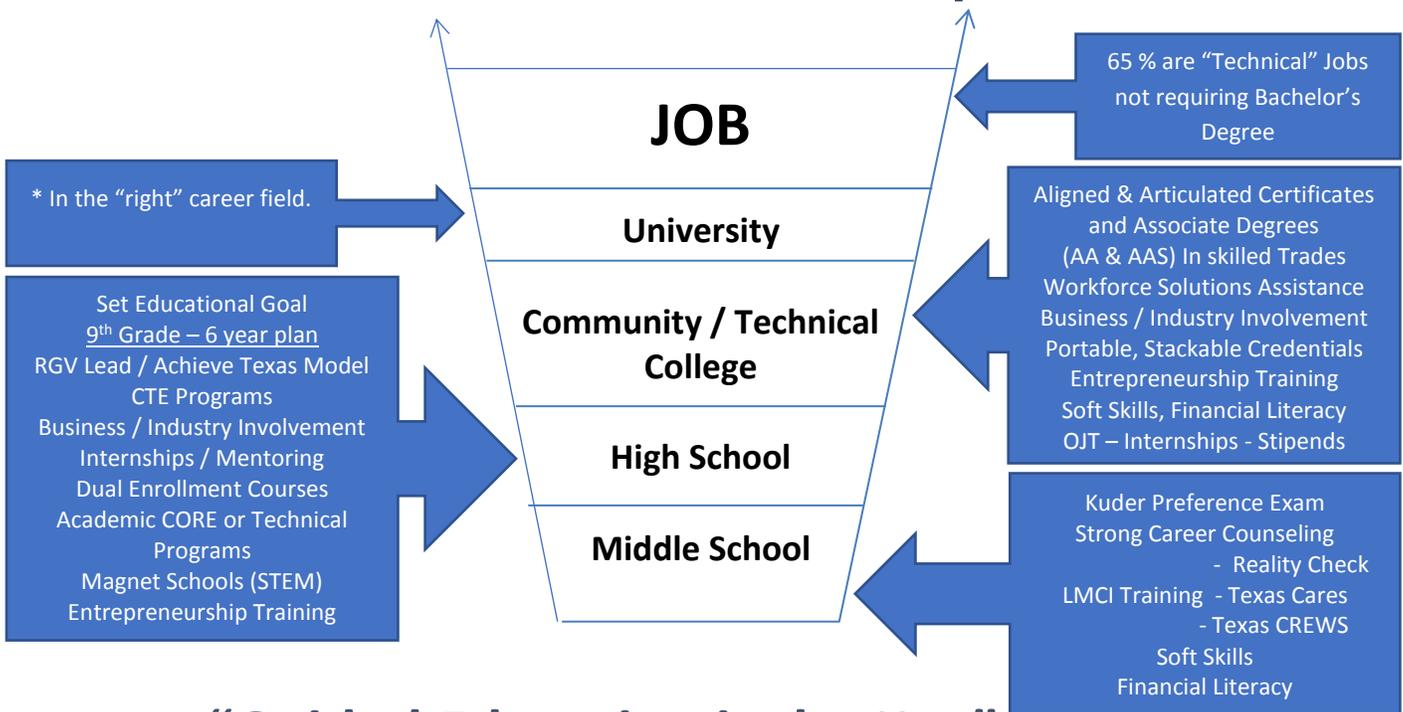
### **Texas State Technical College-Harlingen (TSTC)**

Cameron County is very fortunate to have a TSTC campus in our region. TSTC is a statewide system of technical colleges that delivers an array of basic and specialty technical programs of study not commonly offered by a community college, but which have statewide demand. Since

the needs of the county workforce range from basic to specialty occupations, WFS Cameron works very closely to plan new industry programming and to secure JET and Skills Development grants to assist them in program development. TSTC is also a major partner with most area CTE high school programs, providing technical dual enrollment courses and developing fully articulated and aligned career pathways with portable and stackable certifications. In 2015, TSTC was awarded TWC funding by WFS Cameron to develop nine (9) new NCCER certifications for which training is now taking place.

WFS Cameron infuses these local and regional community initiatives with applicable workforce development resources, leveraging WIOA, TANF, SNAP ET, and additional funding to sponsor training, education, and work experience opportunities for customers of the workforce system. These Career Pathway partnerships leverage the entire larger workforce and education communities and ensure agency coordination to minimize duplication of services.

## “The Workforce Pipeline”



## “Guided Education is the Key”

The “Workforce Pipeline” illustration above depicts the thrust of what WFS Cameron believes will promote a new and healthy growth of the Cameron County workforce for the future, and it assists WFS Cameron officials with delivering this message to area community groups, collective impact councils, ISDs, EDCs, and institutions of higher education. WFS Cameron supports regional partnerships with employers, secondary education, training institutions, and training providers that increase opportunities for youth and adult learners to transition to postsecondary degrees and/or credentials that are portable and stackable.

There are several key messages imbedded in the Workforce Pipeline illustration, and WFS Cameron works with all of its partner groups to understand and support programs and initiatives that help build the pipeline into a new “culture” of education and workforce training.

1. Middle school career awareness counseling is critical. The question is often asked: “How do you expect an 8<sup>th</sup> grader to appropriately select a required TEA Endorsement when entering the 9<sup>th</sup> grade if he/she has no idea what career pathways are available, nor which one best fits their particular attitudes, aptitudes, and abilities?” This why WFS Cameron officials support giving the Kuder Preference Exam to every student in middle school, and why we are training ISDs in the use of TWC’s LMCI applications and other sources of career awareness. WFS Cameron also advocates a variety of career exposure activities in partnership with business and industry. The belief is that a child must make an informed decision on a future career pathway and set an “educational goal” for himself prior to high school. Also of great importance is the necessary involvement of parents in career awareness and the selection of pathways and support for the choices made, especially if the choice is a technical career. The last piece to this segment is that more vocational career counselors are needed at the middle school levels of all ISDs.
2. High schools must provide an array of CTE programs and other support initiatives that align with the demand skill trades occupations in their area, and which are articulated and aligned with college technical programs so that there is no “dead end” for the students when they exit high school with basic skills or minimal certifications. The TEA Achieve Texas model as driven in the Valley by Tech PREP/RGV LEAD has, and is, working well in our school systems. Students are strongly encouraged to proceed to the college ranks for the minimum of a Certificate or Associate of Arts Degree training.
3. At the college level, WFS Cameron works with appropriate administrators of regular and continuing education divisions to provide LMI data that encourages them to make appropriate curriculum decisions for delivery of programs producing graduates in occupations that are in demand, and also supports their business and industry engagement in internships, work experience, OJT, and other workforce services.
4. Getting a job that provides a self-sustaining wage is the ultimate goal of this illustration, and of all the partners who play a role in making it happen. That can’t and won’t happen without a career goal and guided educational pursuits to accomplish that goal. Parents, counselors, and students must keep in mind that decisions made in middle school will impact their future, and they need to know and understand the realities of life.

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

***Board Response:***

WFS program customers are constantly being assessed for barriers to continued participation in services leading them to self-sufficiency. As transportation is identified as a barrier, Career Coaches refer customers to external agencies utilizing 2-1-1 Texas.

2-1-1 Texas is a program of the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, committed to helping Texas citizens connect with the services they need. Whether by phone or internet, their goal is to present accurate, well-organized and easy-to-find information from state and local health and human services programs. 2-1-1 Texas is a free, anonymous social service hotline available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year.

If it is determined that no one in the community can assist the customer with transportation assistance, a support service available through various WFS Cameron programs includes cash assistance for gasoline via a gas card or a bus pass. Customers must meet eligibility requirements for this service.

WFS Cameron participated in a regional initiative to begin a bus route, now known as Route 45 that connects all the cities within Cameron County to the local Colleges & University: Texas State Technical College, Texas Southmost College and University of Texas RG. To date, WFS Cameron proudly supports Route 45, also known as the *Cameron Career Connection*.

Areas being served via Route 45:

- TSTC
- Harlingen Downtown
- Harlingen VTC Station – Harlingen
- Downtown San Benito
- San Benito City Hall
- Los Fresnos City Hall
- Los Fresnos Memorial Park
- Los Fresnos High School
- Downtown Brownsville
- Brownsville Multimodal Terminal
- UTRGV - Brownsville Campus

Connections to Route 45:

- ✓ 31 - Business 83
- ✓ 40 - Harlingen Medical Center
- ✓ 41 - Harlingen Retail
- ✓ 42 - Harlingen-San Benito
- ✓ 44 - La Feria / Santa Rosa / Primera
- ✓ 42 - Harlingen-San Benito
- ✓ 44 - La Feria / Santa Rosa / Primera
- ✓ 50 - Brownsville - Port Isabel B Metro Routes

WFS Cameron is a proud committee member of the Regional Transportation Advisory Panel (RTAP) that is administered under the Councils of Government (COG) through the Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council (LRGVDC).

Texas has established a network of COGs to assist local governments in planning for common needs and to coordinate regional economic development activity. Cameron County falls within the LRGVDC, the local COG. RTAP is led by the LRGVDC, which is a political subdivision of Texas under the Texas Transportation Code, Chapter 458. As such, it authorizes, and receives state funds for transit services. LRGVDC serves as a Rural Transit District (RTD) for Cameron, Hidalgo, Starr, Willacy, and Zapata Counties.

WFS Cameron also provides services to the community, specifically the rural community via our WFS Cameron Mobile Resource Unit. WFS Cameron was one of the first Board areas to acquire a Mobile Unit over 15 years ago. We have grown to partner with over 80 agencies/organizations

by utilizing their parking lots to provide services to the community. We recently upgraded our Unit, increasing its capabilities in serving our residents.

The Mobile Resource Unit assists with the outreach and recruitment of the targeted populations. The wheelchair lift and other adaptive equipment ensure accessibility for our disabled population. Twelve workstations are set up with computers, monitors, laser printer, and a satellite dish for internet connectivity. The Mobile Resource Unit is equipped with the latest technology, wireless capabilities, and software for basic computer skills and resume writing instruction. Utilizing this Mobile Resource Unit, staff are able to provide employment services to the community within their own neighborhoods.

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

**Board Response:**

WFS Cameron has fully implemented and operates the Texas Model for workforce system service delivery. In 2003, the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) implemented the Texas Model for the delivery of Employment Service (ES)(Wagner-Peyser Act services). In Cameron County, the contractor managing and operating the workforce centers has contracted responsibility for day-to-day supervision of TWC ES staff. TWC maintains administrative responsibility of ES merit staff; however, the workforce center contractor shares responsibility for directing daily work assignments, assigning individual performance goals, coordinating hiring, initiating disciplinary action and evaluating staff performance.

Operating under the Texas Model ensures system coordination, and that duplication of services is minimized. In addition, WFS Cameron engages in joint strategic planning with all contractors and partners, stressing the importance of coordination and consistent services provision.

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

**Board Response:**

The Board will identify a review team and implement the review of proposals for the local adult education competition based on Agency guidance.

WFS Cameron is responsible for coordinating and collaborating with adult education and literacy providers in the area, providing technical assistance tied to workforce programs, and workforce services, as needed.

WFS Cameron is continuously working with our Core Partner, local Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) provider, Brownsville Independent School District's (BISD) Adult Continuing Education (ACE) Program, to strengthen our partnership in order to better serve the residents of Cameron County. The BISD ACE Consortium for Cameron County provides educational services to

disadvantaged and under-educated adults, 17 years and older, throughout the county. The program currently holds classes in Brownsville, La Feria, Los Fresnos, Harlingen, San Benito, Santa Maria, and their surrounding communities. In addition to providing language acquisition and basic education courses, the program offers transition classes towards post-secondary education and employment, certification programs, Integrated Education and Training (IET), and a program for internationally trained professionals.

Classes offered by BISD ACE AEL Provider include: English as a Second Language, Adult Basic Education/Adult Secondary Education, Transition classes to post-secondary and/or employment, EL Civics (Welcome Back Center for immigrants with college degrees), US Citizenship classes, Distance Learning (for ESL and ABE participants), and Career Pathways (Certification for Employment). The Career Pathways available at this time include: Microsoft Office Specialist; Carpentry; and Medical Billing & Coding.

Soft Skills, Financial Literacy, LMCI tools, and other job readiness and career/college awareness trainings are provided to BISD AEL participants by WFS Cameron, and cross-referrals are made between the programs where appropriate to serve the customer's needs and to maximize resources.

Our goals for the future include:

- 1) Increase enrollment.
- 2) Provide more opportunities through career pathways.
- 3) Provide more opportunities through Integrated Education and Training for immigrants.

BISD ACE's record on performance confirms the excellent work being performed by our Core Partner. Their awards include:

- 2016 Recipients of Texas Workforce Commission Adult Education and Literacy EFL Gains in ESL
- EFL Gains in ABE/ASE
- EFL Gains Overall Program
- 2015 Recipients of two Outstanding Students of the Year through Texas Association for Literacy and Adult Education (TALAE)
- 2015 Recipients of National Teacher of the Year Runner Up and National Administrator of the Year Runner Up both through Commission on Adult Basic Education (COABE)
- 2014 Recipient Teacher of the Year TALAE
- 2013 Administrator of the Year TALAE

Additionally, WFS Cameron has funded the development of a TV/Radio/Social Media campaign advertising free GED offerings to engage these youth & adults that will hopefully generate increased enrollments.

#### *14. Not Required*

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

***Board Response:***

The entity responsible for disbursing the state and federal grant funds provided under this Workforce Development Plan is:

**Cameron Works, Inc.  
dba Workforce Solutions Cameron  
851 Old Alice Road  
Brownsville, Texas 78520**

The procurement of all goods and services is conducted, to the maximum extent practical, in a manner providing full and open competition consistent with applicable administrative requirements.

The amount of award or contract will determine the procedures used to competitively procure goods and services.

The small purchase method of procurement is used when purchasing goods or services for which the aggregate cost does not exceed the simplified acquisition threshold of \$150,000. When using the small purchase method, Board staff obtains price or rate quotations from an adequate number of qualified sources, usually no less than three (3).

Competitive proposal methods of procurement are appropriate when purchasing goods or services for which the aggregate cost exceeds the simplified acquisition threshold. The competitive proposal method is normally used when two or more responsible bidders are willing and able to compete effectively for the business and the procurement lends itself to a fixed-price or cost-reimbursement contract. The competitive proposal method is generally used when conditions are not appropriate for the sealed bid method.

Competitive proposal procurements meet the following federal requirements:

- Requests for proposals (RFPs) are publicized and identify all evaluation factors and their relative importance. Any response to publicized RFPs is honored to the maximum extent practical;
- RFPs are solicited from an adequate number (usually two or more) of qualified sources;
- a method for conducting technical evaluations of the proposals received and for selecting awardees is utilized;
- awards are made to the responsible firm whose proposal is most advantageous to the program, with price and other factors considered; and
- competitive proposal procedures for qualifications-based procurement of architectural/engineering professional services are utilized whereby competitors' qualifications are evaluated and the most qualified competitor is selected, subject to

negotiation of fair and reasonable compensation. This method, where price is not used as a selection factor, can only be used in procurement of “professional services.”

All non-competitive or sole-source procurements that will be conducted by WFS Cameron receive prior written approval from the Texas Workforce Commission. WFS Cameron maintains written standards of conduct which govern the performance of individuals engaged in the award and administration of contracts and provide for disciplinary action in the event that such standards are violated. The definition of immediate family and substantial interest is included in the standards of conduct. No employee, officer or agent of the Contractor may participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract that is supported by federal or state funds if a conflict of interest or apparent conflict of interest would be involved. In general, a conflict of interest exists when any of the following have a financial or other interest in a firm that is selected to receive an award:

- an employee, officer or agent;
- any member of the employee’s immediate family;
- the employee’s partner; or
- any organization that employs or is about to employ any of these groups.

WFS Cameron standards of conduct prohibit the solicitation and/or acceptance of gratuities, favors or anything of monetary value by an officer, employee, or agent of WFS from a bidder or subcontractor. Every reasonable course of action shall be taken in order to maintain the integrity of the expenditure of public funds and to avoid any favoritism or questionable conduct. Any situation is avoided which suggests that a decision was influenced by prejudice, bias, special interest, or personal gain. WFS Cameron Board Members, Board staff, or agents involved in the procurement process are prohibited from accepting gifts, favors, or anything of monetary value from existing or potential subcontractors.

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

***Board Response:***

The procurement of all goods and services is conducted, to the maximum extent practical, in a manner providing full and open competition consistent with applicable administrative requirements.

The amount of award or contract will determine the procedures used to competitively procure goods and services.

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- RFPs are solicited from an adequate number (usually two or more), of qualified sources;
- A method for conducting technical evaluations of the proposals received and for selecting awardees utilized;
- Awards are made to the responsible firm whose proposal is most advantageous to the program, with price and other factors considered; and,
- Competitive proposal procedures for qualifications-based procurement of qualifications are evaluated and the most qualified competitor is selected, subject to negotiation of fair and reasonable compensation. This method, where price is not used as a selection factor, can only be used in procurement of “professional services.”

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

**Board Response:**

WFS Cameron performance strategies aim to strengthen the alignment of the TWC contracted common performance accountability measures with requirements governing the one-stop delivery system. WFS Cameron sets performance measures above state minimum requirement with Eligible Training Providers and contracted vendors.

WFS Cameron's performance targets are set by TWC and are evaluated, at minimum, monthly based on the "percent of target" being 'met'. There are three levels once evaluated:

- Not Meeting – attained an outcome less than 90% of the target measure
- Meeting – attained an outcome within 90% to 110% of the target measure
- Exceeding – attained an outcome higher than 110% of the target measure

WFS Cameron has taken pride in meeting or exceeding the contract targeted performance measures through BCY2016-2017 and the years prior. Our current Contracted Performance Measures are:

- Claimant Reemployment within 10 weeks
- # of Employers Receiving Workforce Assistance
- Choices Full Work Rate – All Family Total
- Average # Children Served Per Day – Discretionary
- Employed/Enrolled Q2 Post Exit – All Participants
- Employed/Enrolled Q2-Q4 Post Exit – All Participants
- Medial Earnings Q2 Post Exit – All Participants
- Credential Rate – All Participants
- Employed Q2 Post Exit – Adult
- Employed Q4 Post Exit – Adult
- Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit – Adult
- Credential Rate – Adult
- Employed Q2 Post Exit – Dislocated Worker
- Employed Q4 Post Exit – Dislocated Worker
- Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit – Dislocated Worker
- Credential Rate – Dislocated Worker
- Employed Q2 Post Exit – Youth
- Employed Q4 Post Exit – Youth
- Credential Rate – Dislocated Worker

Texas Workforce Commission is currently finalizing performance targets on each measure for each Board area.

*18. Description of the actions the Board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing Board.*

***Board Response:***

WIOA brings massive accountability changes in key accountability concepts, which includes the “participant”, the “exit”, and the “exclusions”. These changes involve replacing the existing common measures. The change will also create significant reporting requirements and a highly structured process for target setting and negotiations.

WFS Cameron’s goal to remain as a high-performing board begins at the customer’s point of entry into our Centers. Once assessed for the type of service, a customer is routed appropriately. Customers that reach the point of being assessed and determined as needing additional services, which includes, but is not limited to, employment assistance, adult & literacy guidance, career pathway guidance, or training assistance, he/she is provided excellent customer service. Career coaching will follow throughout the customer’s involvement in our system, as they receive continued services.

To ensure customer service goals are achieved, customer surveys are in place to capture data on best practices or areas of improvement.

As part of our constant oversight, web and ad-hoc reports are run and extracted to review case management entries to ensure all work being performed is being captured through TWIST.

We constantly review the fields of study being entered into by our customers and their entry into employment once training is completed. We analyze our return on investment, striving to ensure that the customer enters into employment within their field of training or a training related occupation.

Another part of our oversight is our internal and external monitoring teams. For our internal monitoring, a yearly schedule is developed by Board staff to identify the programs, both programmatic and financial, to be reviewed in what are considered high risk areas of concern. Quarterly reports are created and communicated to staff for review and correction, if applicable. Our formal monitoring of both financial and programmatic operations is conducted by external evaluation firms, which are contracted by RFP according to our procurement process. External monitors perform an annual review of all programs based on a risk assessment that identifies high risk areas.

In an effort to improve performance, the board implemented a number of new strategies. One of those strategies is the convening of biweekly performance meeting with the workforce center operator to identify problematic areas that need further action. Processes undertaken by the workforce center staff are discussed and ideas are shared to determine the best course of action to take to ensure performance is met. Services and activities are also identified that should be explored to obtain desired outcomes and possibly be recognized as a best practice.

Another strategy that is utilized to meet performance is the implementation of Technical Assistance Plans (TAP) for low performing measures. A TAP is imposed when performance reaches a critical level and the Board needs to ensure effective corrective action strategies are

taken. A TAP also allows the Board to closely monitor the actions and strategies implement to improve performance. Formal reviews by both the workforce center staff and the Board are conducted and reports are formulated to detail the results of those reviews. A TAP is generally considered when intensive oversight must be conducted to resolve issues of non-compliance.

Additionally, the Board takes the following steps to review, manage, and correct performance:

- TWC performance reports are reviewed at bimonthly meetings,
- Case file reviews of workforce programs;
- Formal monitoring is conducted on an annual basis;
- Internal monitoring reports are submitted by the workforce center operator.

The Board also performs ongoing reviews of the performance data focusing on those measures in which the Board is either not meeting performance, has not met performance in the past, or is in danger of failing performance. Reports are generated on a continuous basis and the data is analyzed to determine if appropriate action has been taken to improve the measure(s) in question. Contractor is provided technical assistance during the corrective action process.

*19. A description of how training services outlined in WIOA §134 will be provided through the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), including, if contracts for training services will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of ITAs under that chapter, and how the Board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs, regardless of how the training services are to be provided.*

**Board Response:**

Training services are provided by the one-stop delivery system through the use of Individual Training Accounts. Training services are provided to workforce participants for training programs certified under the Eligible Training Provider System (ETP). The ETP system is a statewide system where participants may select training programs approved locally by each Board area and certified by the Texas Workforce Commission. The Board establishes maximum ITA funding amounts and certain eligibility and performance criteria for eligible workforce participants and providers. Participants utilize Individual Training Accounts to purchase training services for occupational skills training in the targeted occupations approved by the Board of Directors of WFS Cameron.

Workforce center staff develops an Individual Employment Plan (IEP) for program participants seeking to purchasing training services through an ITA. The IEP outlines the employment goals and objectives and describes how the selected training supports the services and activities noted. A listing of the approved training programs for the area are provided to the program participants to ensure customer choice in the section of training services. If the cost of the training selected exceeds the board approved ITA amount, workforce center staff assist participants in identifying other sources of funding to cover the total cost of training.

ITAs are awarded for a twelve month period and may be renewed for another 12 months, for a maximum of 2 years. Since the training must be complete within two years, participants are

encouraged to enroll on a full-time basis. Funds for training are limited to individuals wishing to enroll in occupational programs approved under ETP and aligned with the Board's industry sectors and targeted occupations. Participants must demonstrate the ability to meet all training program prerequisites and requirements.

WFS Cameron will pursue a pay-for-performance contract in lieu of an Individual Training Account for training services if such services are on-the-job training, customized training, or incumbent worker training. Additionally, if it is determined, after a thorough analysis, that there is an insufficient number of eligible providers of training services in the region to meet the skill set requirements of employers, contracted services will be pursued to meet those workforce requirements. The board may also entertain contracted services if we determine that there is a training program with demonstrated effectiveness offered by a local community-based organization or another private organization that serves individuals with barriers to employment. Regardless of whether training is provided through an ITA or contracted services, the board will ensure that training is provided in a manner that maximizes customer choice.

WFS Cameron does not currently have any contracts for training services; however, we reserve the right to procure training services as allowed under WIOA for special initiatives grants, pilot projects and other non-WIOA funding sources. The Eligible Training Provider System is used for all occupational skills training services.

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

***Board Response:***

Technology is a huge part of WFS Cameron's day-to-day operation. In addition to the state-wide systems being utilized for case management and information sharing, WFS Cameron utilizes shared drives internally to ensure constant communication and information sharing.

Upon entry into one of our centers, front desk staff welcome customers and utilize WCCT to advise corresponding staff of the customer's reason for visit to the center. WCCT stands for ***Workforce Career Center Traffic***. This is a system that provides WFS Cameron a tool to record customer information during Center visits for all programs. It creates an intake common record for new customers, adds customers to a waiting list upon sign-in at a Center, and allows Center staff to view customer information on a Daily Customer Log.

To case-manage and provide services available, the following systems, managed by Texas Workforce Commission, are utilized by staff:

- ***The Workforce Information System of Texas (TWIST)*** is the computer system sponsored by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) for intake, eligibility determination, assessment, service tracking, and reporting of TWC administered programs, such as child

care, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education & Training (SNAP E&T, Choices, and the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA).

- **WorkInTexas.com** is a comprehensive online job search resource and matching system developed and maintained by the Texas Workforce Commission. It provides recruiting assistance to Texas employers of all types and sizes, and job search assistance to any individual seeking work in Texas.
- **Child Care Attendance and Automation (CCAA)** allows parents and authorized pickup people to check in at a computer check-in station.
- **Choices OnLine Tracking System (COLTS)** is a web-based tool used to store and display data regarding NCP Choices participants.
- **Texas Integrated Enrollment Redesign System (TIERS)** is the automated system that supports Health and Human Services Commission's (HHSC) eligibility determination for cash assistance (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families – TANF), medical assistance (Medicaid), and food assistance (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – SNAP).

Other systems supported locally that contribute to the day-to-day operation of the programs within WFS Cameron include the following:

- Aviator - Software that uses the O\*NET database in conjunction with various assessments to aid users in identifying occupations that fit their skills and interests.
- TABE Online - It is the only adult basic skills assessment available online to quickly assess skills for training and employment, or to determine readiness to take the high school equivalency exam.
- JobsEQ - Software to assist in converting labor market data into actionable intelligence.
- WorkKeys - Skills assessment test for those who are interested in or are currently working for employers that place an emphasis on the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC), which is the credential achieved by those who successfully complete the exam.

Additional technology/software that is available in our centers, enabling customers to access our services and/or enabling staff to provide services, includes:

- Jaws Screen Reader - Job Access With Speech (JAWS) is developed for computer users whose vision loss prevents them from seeing screen content or navigating with a mouse. JAWS provides speech and Braille output for PCs.
- Zoom Text Screen Magnifier - Zoom Text provides a full range of magnification levels up to 36x.
- Braille Blazer Printing Software - Enables the printing of braille sheets.
- Video Phone Relay - Enables persons with hearing disabilities who use American Sign Language to communicate with voice telephone users through video equipment, rather than through typed text.
- Computer Connected Scanning and Reader - Enables blind and low vision users instant portable access to printed material with voice.

- Speech Amplification System – Enables the user to amplify their voice effectively, reducing vocal stress and strain.

Our Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) Core Partner has access to TWIST and utilizes it as needed during their eligibility determination process.

Another Core Partner, Vocational Rehabilitation, has access to WorkInTexas.com. One-Stop Partner, Senior Community Employment Program, also has access to WorkInTexas.com. Both of these partners utilize this system to help customers with job search efforts.

The Board has also strengthened its outreach and communication through social media. Workforce Solutions Cameron communicates upcoming events and initiatives with job seekers, youth, and employers through Facebook, Twitter and radio public service announcements. Information that will continue to be provided includes job fairs, career fairs, Youth Ambassador program, outreach, workshops, and #MyDreamJob social media campaign. Technology will be used as a resource to communicate with partners and the public about all workforce activities and services.

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

**Board Response:**

WFS Cameron has in place an approved policy in compliance with above cited section. Our Board policy is also compliant with the TWC Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act: Guidelines for Adults, Dislocated Workers, and Youth, stating:

Service Priority for Individualized career services and training services must be given on a priority basis, regardless of funding levels; to:

- public assistance recipients;
- other low-income adults; and
- individuals who are basic skills deficient.

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

**Board Response:**

WFS Cameron does limit funding to individuals who are unable to obtain other grant assistance for training, or whose financial needs exceed the assistance available from other sources.

WIOA funds will be awarded as follows:

1. WIOA funds under the ITA system will be awarded for the total cost of training, limited to ITA maximum amounts stated herein, to participants who were unable to find other grant assistance and/or no other funding is available for the training program; and/or
2. WIOA funds under the ITA system will only be awarded for the amount not covered by other resources in the event that a participant's financial need exceeds the assistance available from other sources. In determining financial need, simply reducing the amount of WIOA funds by the amount of the Pell Grant or other sources of Federal student financial assistance is not permitted.
3. Loans shall be excluded from the determination of financial need.
4. A WIOA participant may enroll in WIOA-paid training while a Pell Grant application is pending. If the Pell Grant application is approved, WIOA must be reimbursed for the amount of the ITA if a portion of the Pell Grant is used to pay for training costs already paid for by the ITA.

#### ITA Limits

##### Multi Term Training Programs

The lifetime limit of an ITA for multi term training program is \$9,000 per participant. Participants may receive up to \$4500 per 12 month cycle for up to 2 years. The use of ITA funds is limited to tuition expenses, fees, books, supplies, and any other related material required by the training provider for any student enrolled in a particular course of study covered by the ITA.

Multi-term training programs are defined as programs where the training is divided into semesters and each semester coincides with a new round of tuition payments separate and apart from the initial round of tuition payments.

##### One Term Training Programs

The lifetime limit of an ITA for one term training programs is \$4,500 per participant. The use of ITA funds is limited to tuition expenses, fees, books, supplies, and any other related material required by the training provider for any student enrolled in a particular course of study covered by the ITA.

Changes to the training program (or majors) will be allowed as long as the change is in line with the training institution's satisfactory progress standards, the changes will allow the student to complete the new course of study within the original time period, and is approved by the Contractor. The request for change to the training program must be justified and properly documented. Participants who change course plans must provide a revised course plan, which demonstrates his/her ability to complete the course within the original time period. The change must be supported by the assessment results, IEP, demand target occupations, skills and aptitudes of the student. Additionally, the new course of study must be on the state approved ETPS training provider/course list. A limit of one (1) training program change (school change or change of major) will be allowed on each ITA. If the change is approved, the participant will be

issued a new voucher for the change in training. However, only the remainder of the lifetime limit will be awarded to the participant and documented in the new voucher.

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

**Board Response:**

The 14 WIOA program elements for youth are:

- Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to secondary school completion, including dropout prevention strategies
- Alternative secondary school offerings or dropout recovery services
- Paid and unpaid work experiences with an academic and occupational education component
- Occupational skill training, with a focus on recognized postsecondary credentials and in-demand occupations
- Leadership development activities (e.g., community service, peer-centered activities)
- Supportive services
- Adult mentoring
- Follow-up services for at least 12 months after program completion
- Comprehensive guidance and counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse counseling
- Integrated education and training for a specific occupation or cluster
- Financial literacy education
- Entrepreneurial skills training
- Services that provide labor market information about in-demand industry sectors and occupations
- Postsecondary preparation and transition activities

As noted in the Economic Analysis of our Region, Cameron County has a young workforce. The median age for Cameron County is 31. Therefore, it is crucial that we provide strong programs for our youth population.

WFS Cameron will work with partnering agencies within the area to support the youth services that will be provided to our future workforce. Some of our partnering agencies and the services provided include:

- BISD, TSTC, and Cameron County Juvenile Justice to provide GED services, as well as dropout recovery,
- Various employers throughout Cameron County to provide work experience opportunities,

- Local Colleges and Universities, to include Proprietary Schools to provide post-secondary occupational certificates and degreed programs,
- Internal Career Coaches will be providing leadership opportunities and provide support services,
- Community Development Corporation of Brownsville (CDCB) for financial aid literacy,
- Tropical Texas for comprehensive guidance and counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse counseling, and
- Various agencies for entrepreneurial skills training, to include local Chambers of Commerce, The Small Business Administration (SBA), and UTRGV Business Development Center.

All youth program participants are provided follow-up services for a minimum of twelve months after they've exited the program.

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

***Board Response:***

Industry-aligned partnerships such as apprenticeships are some of the strategies that WFS Cameron will utilize to increase employer participation. As a service strategy for employers, WFS Cameron will identify and outreach registered apprenticeship programs in the county to provide information about program services and opportunities available under the workforce system. The Board will outline the benefits of partnering with the workforce system such as up-front screening and referral of potential participants, and the availability of supportive services for these participants.

Once registered apprenticeships have been identified, staff will inform each sponsor of the following:

- Automatically eligible for participation in the Eligible Training Provider Certification System as outlined in , WD 16-17, Change 1
- Availability of technical assistance for accessing ETP system,
- Availability of technical assistance for applying and submitting program applications, and
- Availability of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) for WIOA eligible program participants.

Since this automatic eligibility streamlines the application process, Registered Apprenticeship sponsors may be more willing to apply under the Eligible Training Provider system. In encouraging participation, the board will point out that WIOA funds may be used to leverage funding and program costs, since Chapter 133 funds for apprenticeship programs is limited. WIOA funds may support either the classroom training portion of the training or the work-based training through an On-the-Job Training activity.

Board will also encourage Registered Apprenticeship to participants under the ETP system to promote the national credentials that these type of trainings offer, as well as opportunities in career pathways for both youth and adults.

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

**Board Response:**

WFS Cameron will support Apprenticeship Texas through various strategies including those outlined in the above response to increase apprenticeship training in Cameron County. This training model will be promoted to the business community as an alternative strategy to develop a skilled workforce in high demand occupations. Since apprenticeships are structured occupational training programs, the board will outline the benefits of combining on-the-job training and related instruction so workers may learn practical and conceptual skills required for a skilled occupation in a craft or trade.

The Board will also explore pre-apprenticeship opportunities for youth to promote potential career pathways, since work experience under the youth program elements includes pre-apprenticeship training. Work experience is a funding priority in which at least 20% of local youth allocation must be spent on this activity. Additionally, the Board will coordinate referral and training opportunities with Job Corp since they recognize apprenticeship as a career pathway. The board has also had a long-term partnership with Youthbuild and supported their pre-apprenticeship training in the construction industry.

The Business Services Unit (BSU) will also play an important role in supporting the Apprenticeship Texas effort in Cameron county. BSU will be tasked with promoting the development of apprenticeship training by informing business that:

- Registered Apprenticeship can be as short as one year,
- Apprenticeship programs are available in various industries and occupations,
- Components of an apprenticeship program are very flexible (e.g., many models),
- Opportunity exists to develop highly skilled workers,
- Apprenticeship training can reduce turnover,
- Apprenticeship training can increase productivity, and that
- A national credential is awarded through apprenticeship training.

The Board will coordinate training with the state office so that businesses can obtain a better insight into the benefits of apprenticeships. The services and training sought may include:

- Training staff, including case managers and business service reps (BSRs) on apprenticeship training,
- Developing an effective outreach plan,
- Developing new apprenticeship programs,
- Assisting in marketing Registered Apprenticeship,
- Obtaining technical assistance to learn about enrollments, exits and other operational details, and
- Providing on-going support and services.

WFS Cameron will promote Apprenticeship Texas on our website and utilize the BSU to highlight this initiative at appropriate business functions. Additionally, if TWC is awarded the Apprenticeship Texas Expansion Grant, the Board will set up regional workgroups to explore non-traditional industries for the expansion and development of apprenticeship training. Some of the targeted populations for this initiative include youth, women, veterans, and individuals with disabilities. Innovative strategies that were proposed include competency-based training and distance or on-line learning. Core components of Registered Apprenticeship listed below will be promoted to employers to educate and possibly expand apprenticeship training regardless of whether the grant is awarded:

- Employer Involvement,
- Structured OJT component with mentoring,
- Related Training and Instruction (RTI), and
- National Occupational Credential.

Registered Apprenticeship will also be promoted to job seeker utilizing the workforce center so that they may explore all training opportunities available and entice them to try out this training model and take advantage of the following apprenticeship inducements:

- Career pathways to higher skills/wages,
- Nationally recognized credentials and potential to earn college credit,
- immediate employment to increase skills and earnings, and
- Connection to the workforce system for supportive services opportunities.

Supporting Apprenticeship Texas will undoubtedly improve our performance outcomes because participants begin working since day one. There is a high retention rate for apprenticeship training, and this training supports measurable skills gained under WIOA.

## Part C: Public Comment

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

### ***Board Response:***

Consistent with WIOA §108(d), WFS Cameron will make available to the general public the 2017-2020 WFS Cameron Texas Workforce Development Plan Modification as follows:

- A Notice of Public Comments ad will be placed in print media with largest circulations in our WDA.
- The Plan Modification was made available during the review period for viewing and public comments at the administration office and both full-service Workforce Centers in hard copy.
- The Plan Modification was made available for viewing and public comments during the review period via the Corporate Website: [www.wfscameron.org](http://www.wfscameron.org)
- The Plan Modification was provided for review to the Board of Directors and Board Committees, County Judge, and the Mayor of Brownsville.

General Publication Date of Public Notice: January 27, 2019

Review Period – from January 27 to February 26, 2019

Board Action of Approval: January 24, 2019

Finalize Plan with Comment as needed: March 1, 2019

Submission to TWC: by March 15, 2019

Jesus G. Salazar  
Coordinator for Purchasing

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### NOTICE OF SOLICITATION FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS

Workforce Solutions Cameron (WFSC), the Workforce Development Board (WDB) of Cameron County, issues this public notice of the Modification for the 4 Year Local Workforce Plan for program years 2017-2020. WFSC is responsible for the implementation of workforce development programs throughout the Cameron County area.

WFSC's Local Workforce Plan Modification for Program Years 2017-2020 will be submitted to the Texas Workforce Commission no later than March 15, 2019. At a minimum, the Local Workforce Plan will include:

- Strategic Narrative
- Elements of System Operation
- Partners and Stakeholders
- System Structure
- Performance and Feedback
- List of Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations Identified Through Labor Market Analysis
- Statewide Goals and Objectives

Workforce Programs and services in this Strategic and Operational Plan include:

- Workforce Innovative & Opportunity Act
- Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers
- Wagner Peyser
- Trade Adjustment Act
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education & Training
- Veterans
- Adult Education Literacy
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families
- Rapid Response
- Child Care
- Vocational Rehabilitation Services

The public comment period will begin on January 27, 2019 and will end at the close of business (5:00 p.m. CST) on February 26, 2019.

Public comments may be submitted at any time during the period of solicitation, but comments must be in writing and either faxed, emailed, or mailed to the following postal address:

Workforce Solutions Cameron  
Mr. Pat Hobbs, Executive Director  
851 Old Alice  
Brownsville, Texas 78520

Written comments may be faxed to the following numbers: (956) 548-6717 or e-mailed via the WFSC's website at [www.wfscameron.org](http://www.wfscameron.org)

The general public may also access the document on the Board's website at [www.wfscameron.org](http://www.wfscameron.org) or interested parties may view a hard copy of the working draft of the Local Workforce Plan Modification document at 851 Old Alice, Brownsville, Texas or at 601 E. Harrison Street, Harlingen, Texas.

All comments will be submitted to the Texas Workforce Commission and incorporated as part of the Board's Strategic and Operational Plan.

Workforce Solutions Cameron is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Relay Texas 1-800-735-2989(TTY)/711 (Voice).

**Call Us At 1-866-572-SELL (7355)**

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IC COMMENTS

JOSE A. CARRIZALES III  
January 2019.

Maria E. Garcia  
blic, Cameron County  
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MARIA E. GARCIA  
Notary Public, State of Texas  
Comm. Expires 06-06-2020  
130689539

VALLEY MORNING STAR

ASSIFIED

## Formstack Submission For: [Contact US](#)

Submitted at 02/26/19 2:52 PM

Name: Thomas Solano

Phone: (956) 548-2100

Email: [alliedskills@yahoo.com](mailto:alliedskills@yahoo.com)

Questions or  
Comments:

I would like to leave a comment in response to the notice of solicitation for public comments, particularly regarding the WIOA program. As you may already know I am the Owner/Director of Allied Skills Training Center in Brownsville. Since 2005 we have assisted individuals in building a more successful future for themselves. For many years, TWC covered the cost of our welding program however that abruptly came to an end after it was determined that the projected growth for welders was not what it needed to be in order to continue as an approved program. We were also told it was because there was too many unemployed welders currently in the area. Be it as it may we often have potential students ask why Hidalgo County currently sponsors the cost of our training yet Cameron County does not. Our employment percentage for our 2016/2017 school year is 80.56% and our employment percentage for 2017/2018 is projected to be 89%. Recently the Port of Brownsville (Antex, AD Welding, and Port Fabricators) has begun hiring again and they are having difficulty meeting the need for welders in this area. As a matter of fact Kiewit offshore services will be here March 7, 2019 for a recruiting event. Kiewit Offshore services normally recruits from our school once a month. Often times the work is not located in the RGV but many people choose not to uproot their families from their familiar routine so they opt to leave their family behind yet they still send money to their love ones here in the RGV, so their earnings are spent and invested here. Welding is not for everyone but it is a shame to see so many individuals turned away from what could potentially be a lifeline for their future. We have many success stories from previous students who were sponsored by TWC and we would like to continue adding to those.

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