



**Local Workforce
Development Board
Brazos Valley Region**

Workforce Solutions Brazos Valley

**Program Years
2021-2024**

Workforce Solutions Brazos Valley Board Local Workforce Development Plan Program Years 2021-2024

Introduction

Under WIOA Section 108, each Local WDB is required to develop and submit a comprehensive 4-year plan to the Governor that identifies and describes policies and procedures as well as local activities that are in line with the State Plan. This “Local Plan” must be developed in an open manner and be available to the public for comment for a 15-day period, particularly to members of the business and education communities, as well as various other labor organizations. The Local WDB must submit any public comments of disagreement with the plan to TWC along with the submission.

At the end of the first two-year period, the appropriate chief elected officials and the Local WDB will review the local plan and prepare and submit modifications that reflect any changes in the labor market and economic conditions, factors affecting the implementation of the plan, various changes in financing, changes to the structure of the workforce board, or the need to revise strategies to meet local performance goals. The plan is presented as part of a template supplied by TWC.

Part 1: Board Vision and Strategies

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

A. Vision and Goals

Workforce Solutions Brazos Valley Board’s (WSBVB) is the publicly funded workforce development organization serving the Brazos Valley Workforce Development Area. The Brazos Valley WDA consists of Brazos, Burlison, Grimes, Leon, Madison, Robertson, and Washington counties. The Board’s fiscal and administrative agent is Brazos Valley Council of Government (BVCOG). The Board’s vision is to be the workforce organization of choice for employers and job seekers. The organization’s mission statement is to provide employers with a quality workforce.

The Board’s goals are:

1) Expand collaborations and networks with community-based organizations in each county of the region, where needed. Collaborations shall concentrate on key areas such as education, social services and health services.

Specifically, through educating community-based organizations about Workforce and Adult Education and Literacy services, the Workforce Board will develop and implement Memoranda of

Understanding that will allow engagement with community partners in all counties included in the Brazos Valley Region. The Board will promote the workforce center's monthly training calendar on various social media outlets to inform customers and employers about the workforce center's work readiness training tools and career assessment tools.

2) *Build awareness about the benefits offered by the Workforce Center and Adult Education & Literacy (AEL) services to Brazos Valley residents.*

Specifically, the Board will establish a standard of social media outlets for outreach to increase the customer's knowledge of services available through the various programs offered through the workforce center. The Board will also create informational outreach material (both digital and hard copy) that highlights the workforce center's one-stop services and to rebrand the workforce center's marketing and enrollment efforts, especially in rural communities. The Board will form industry groups to promote workforce services and programs that are designed to provide a full range of assistance to job seekers under one roof as an American Job Center. The Board will work with workforce center staff to organize employer seminars to inform employers about initiatives offered through the workforce center. These program initiatives will include Skills Development Grants, High Demand Grants and Skills for Small Businesses. by updating technology to increase visibility and accessibility to workforce services for jobseekers, the Board will promote all community workforce targeted programs in the American Job Centers and will share resources that assist in other partner programs by using electronic and social media. To promote one-stop services, information about available services are available to board members, employers and jobseekers.

3) *Utilize an established referral system to coordinate with workforce partners to identify and assess customers who need workforce services.*

The Board will work with area partners to determine workplace readiness training customers need to develop their skills for employability and will address all defined barriers to employment and partner with community partners to upskill job seekers so they can increase their earnings. Also, the Board and workforce center staff will work with regional partners to leverage resources needed to establish an effective referral system that addresses customer barriers and needs. coordinate with partners to identify and assess qualified jobseekers in need of workforce

4) *Promote the workforce center's one-stop services that include post-secondary education, occupational assessments and work readiness training support. a robust, holistic one-stop service that includes secondary education, occupational training and intensive case management and support.*

B. Specifically, the Workforce Contractor will provide a monthly report on outreach activities completed by the Contractor staff listing the places and contacts where they conducted outreach . The Child Care Services (CCS) Contractor will provide a monthly report on Workforce and Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) (referrals provided to all CCS customers listing the number of referrals for Workforce and the number of referrals for AEL. Also, the Workforce Center Contractor will provide a monthly report with the number of employers utilizing the Work Keys assessment, the number of job seekers that

have taken the Work Keys assessment and the number of job seekers obtaining employment based on the Work Keys assessment. Board Strategies

The core programs for the WSBVB include the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Child Care Services (CCS), Employment Services (ES), Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF or Choices), Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), Adult Education Literacy Program (AEL), and TANF Non-Custodial Parent Program (NCP). The priority of service focuses on adult career and training services for recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient as well as veterans, spouses of veterans, and foster children. An additional focus is creating opportunities for out of school youth to engage in labor market and career information resources. To accomplish the plan for delivery of the core programs, WSBVB chooses partners with which they can collaborate to provide access to workforce development and career and training assistance for employers and jobseekers alike. Working with local partners, the Board can enhance services provided to jobseekers and can address jobseeker barriers. Partnerships with employer organizations as well as industry groups ensures that the Board and its contractors understand employer needs and addresses those needs through their program design and workforce center system operation.

Key partnerships and their operational components are:

- *Area Agency on Aging – deliver workforce services for older workers*
- *Blinn College Non-Certificate Post-Secondary Career & Technical Training Provider, credit certificate and degree training – coordination of core services assessment, education and employment services*
- *Brazos Valley Aging and Disability Resource Center – access to services*
- *Brazos Valley Mental Health and Mental Retardation – referral for employment services for customers with mental health and substance abuse*
- *Department of Family and Protective Services Preparation for Adult Living Program – employment training and support services*
- *AARP Foundation SCSEP – opportunity for older workers to obtain and/or train for meaningful employment*
- *Financial Fitness – financial coaching*
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- *Project Unity – interagency case management*
- *Texas A&M University AgriLife Extension – facilitate of collaboration of sustainable job preparation for unemployed/underemployed youth*
- *The Brazos Valley Council on Alcohol and Substance Abuse – referral service*
- *The Office of the Attorney General – employment referral for unemployed/underemployed non-custodial parents*
- *Twin City Mission Home Partners – referral services, training and support*
- *Twin City Mission Rapid Re-Housing Program – referral services*

Each partner plays an important role in providing access to workforce development services. Partner agencies share information on jobseeker needs, business developments, available services to

customers, and access to resources to ensure that workforce development services are efficient and not duplicated.

The Board will align strategic and tactical plans with the workforce center staff to support best practices for partnering with agency partners to ensure that strategic goals and tactical plans are supported. Quarterly reviews will ensure that all parties involved align with these strategic and tactical goals. The plans include Childcare Services. The workforce center as developed relationships with the following partners for referrals for customers: The Adult Education & Literacy (AEL) Program, Housing Program, Texas Veteran's Commission (TVC), Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS), Childcare, Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC), Brazos Valley Affordable Housing Corp (BVAHC), Project Unity and Brazos Valley Community Action Program (BVCAP).

The actions a Board will take to become or remain a high-performing Board.

WSBVB monitors contractor performance monthly. WSBVB reviews any measure at risk of not meeting the required performance to determine if there is a need to implement corrective actions for the contractor. Continued failure to meet required performance by the contractor may result in the development of a technical assistance plan with specific steps to address deficiencies. The Board will ask for assistance if there is failure to meet performance to seek out best practices.

Part 2. Economic and Workforce Analysis

A. Regional Economic and Employment Needs Analysis

The Brazos Valley Workforce Development Area (WDA) is located in south central Texas in an area consisting of seven counties: Brazos, Burleson, Grimes, Leon, Madison, Robertson, and Washington. Bryan and College Station are the major cities in the WDA. Cities in the region are presented in Table 1. There are also a number of unincorporated communities in the region. Texas A&M University, located in College Station, is one of the largest employers in the WDA and attracts firms related to high-tech, medical research and agribusiness.

The Brazos Valley Region has experienced and is continuing to experience growth. The Regional population has increased by 3.2% since 2022 and is expected to increase between 2020 and 2030. The civilian labor force for the region is 182,819. Labor force participation rate trends followed an upward since the pandemic, with a 3.4 percent unemployment rate. The unemployment rate will continue to decrease as more jobseekers find employment. Unemployment was significantly impacted by the pandemic hitting its highest rate of 8.5% in April 2020. However, it is important to note that it's decline is a positive attribute for all industries. Educational attainment reports show that a little over half of the regional population has attained some college or higher, however the region's percentage of Bachelor's Degree and Associate's Degree possession is below the national average.

The BVCOG Region's largest industries are in Government, Accommodation and Food Services, and Retail Trade. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic significantly impacted the Accommodation and Food Services Industries. These areas have been monitored and watched closely, even to the point of developing special programs for hiring events for these two industries. From 2020, some of the greatest percent changes in jobs were in Restaurants and Other Eating Places at 32%, Machine Shops, Turned product and Screw, Nut and Bolt Manufacturing at 59%, Other Amusement and Research Industries at 40.4% and Highway, Street and Bridge construction at 36.8%. The largest Gross Regional Product (GRP) for the regional goods and services produced in 2019 exceeded one billion dollars in both the manufacturing and government industries.

Industry data shows the highest percent increase in change came from Business Support Services Employment, Scientific Research and Development Services, Other Ambulatory Health Services, Machine Shops, Turned product and Screw, Nut and Bolt Manufacturing, and Lawn and Garden Equipment and Supplies Stores with over 50% increase and an additional 1949 jobs expected to be added from 2020-2030. Restaurants and Other Eating Places, and Other Amusement and Recreation Industries is expected to experience a 30 – 40 % increase from 2020-2030. The industries with the largest expected increases in total number of jobs from 2020-2030 include Restaurants and Other Eating Places, Colleges, Universities and Professional Schools, Utility System Construction and Elementary and Secondary Schools had an increase of 7,986 jobs., Food and Beverage Stores, Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing Looking ahead, the occupations that are predicted to have the highest percent regional growth within the next five years are Restaurants and Other Eating Places, Colleges, Universities and Professional Schools Elementary and Secondary Schools, Automotive Parts, Accessories and Tire Sales, Computer Design and Related Services, Residential Building Construction, Gasoline Stations and Other Specialty Trade Contractors Occupations. . Business and Financial Operations occupations falls mostly in Education and Hospital industries with skills needed in accounting, auditing and financial statements. Soft skill needs focus on operations and management experience. Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations are also mostly in the

education, Ambulatory Healthcare Services and Business Support Services Occupations. industries. The skill needs for these occupations include biology, chemistry and biochemistry along with skills needed for food safety, manufacturing, education and scientific research and development.

For the emerging regional occupations in Food Preparation and Services Related Occupations, Healthcare Support Occupations and Community, Education and Social Service Occupations, jobseekers will need some skills training to be competitive for available positions. Although the Food Preparation Occupation has a supply in jobs in the Region that is higher than the national average, candidates to fill positions will still need some training to be competitive with their competition. In the last 12 months, 331 employers posted 3,381 unique job postings. This occupation will require some skills training in restaurant operations, food service and food preparation, communications, sanitation and customer service.

Occupations in Healthcare Support will continue to grow over the next five years. Currently most occupations in this industry are in the Home Health Care Services and Skilled Nursing Facilities. Currently, there are 273 employers competing for employees in this occupation. Hard skills needed are nursing, caregiving, vital signs and medical records with common necessary skills being communication, customer service and compassion skills. There were 103 degrees/certificates that were awarded for this occupation in 2019 with seven (7) programs in the region that can produce degrees and 50 programs that can train for this job.

The cities located in the Brazos Valley WDA are listed in Table 1. The major industries by level of employment are listed in Table 2.

Table 1: Cities in Brazos Valley WDA

<i>Anderson</i>	<i>Jewett</i>
<i>Bedias</i>	<i>Kurten</i>
<i>Bremond</i>	<i>Leona</i>
<i>Brenham</i>	<i>Madisonville</i>
<i>Bryan</i>	<i>Marquez</i>
<i>Buffalo</i>	<i>Midway</i>
<i>Burton</i>	<i>Navasota</i>
<i>Caldwell</i>	<i>Normangee</i>
<i>Calvert</i>	<i>Oakwood</i>
<i>Centerville</i>	<i>Snook</i>
<i>College Station</i>	<i>Somerville</i>
<i>Franklin</i>	<i>Todd Mission</i>
<i>Hearne</i>	<i>Wixon Valley</i>

Table 2: Industries by Employment (3rd Quarter 2022, Percent Change)

Industry	Employment	% of Total	% Quarterly Change	% Yearly Change
Natural Resources and Mining	4,720	3.0%	4.1%	4.8%
Construction	8,999	5.8%	-0.2%	6.2%
Manufacturing	11,241	7.2%	1.7%	6.7%
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	25,898	16.6%	0.4%	4.4%
Information	1,627	1.0%	8.5%	9.0%
Financial Activities	5,774	3.7%	1.2%	4.1%
Professional and Business Services	13,778	8.8%	2.9%	11.4%
Education and Health Services	52,333	33.5%	-3.7%	7.7%
Leisure and Hospitality	21,121	13.5%	1.3%	8.6%
Other Services	3,280	2.1%	-1.1%	2.7%
Public Administration	7,578	4.8%	1.6%	1.4%

Source: TWC LMI Profile

As presented in Table 2, the region's employment is concentrated in six industries: Education and Health Services, Trade, Transportation and Utilities, Leisure and Hospitality, Manufacturing and Professional and Business Services and Construction. Public Administration and Natural Resources and Mining also add to employment industries.

Employment by ownership indicates 71.1% of jobseekers employed are in private sector jobs. State government accounts for 18.3% of employment in the region. Local government employs 9.9% of individuals in the labor market and Federal government employment is at 0.7%. (Source: Texas Workforce Commission Labor Market and Career Information Economic Profile for Brazos Valley September 2022)

Employment by industry shows 33.50% of employment is in Education and Health Services. The next largest sector is Trade, Transportation and Utilities at 16.6%. Manufacturing employment represents 7.2% of the total. Professional and Business Services is 8.8% of employment by industry. Construction accounts for 5.8% of employment in the region. The trend shows declining employment in all of the 12 industries identified by TWC information. Education and Health Services, Leisure and Hospitality and Professional and Business Services show the least decline. Natural Resources and Mining declined to a rate of 3.0%.

Optimizing economic growth will require well-trained workers across a spectrum of occupations. The occupations with the highest overall growth tend to occur in education, government, accommodation and food services and health care fields. Technical occupations are important occupations also. Between 2020-2030, the Brazos Valley Region will need workers with Bachelor and Associate degrees or some other type of postsecondary training to meet growth and replacement needs.

The Texas Workforce Commission Labor Market and Career Information Department provides Boards with industry and occupation projection tables.

Projected Employment by Industry to 2030

<i>NAICS</i>	<i>Industry</i>	<i>2020 Annual Average Employment</i>	<i>2030 Annual Average Employment</i>	<i>Number change 2020-2030</i>	<i>Percent Growth 2020 - 2030</i>
7225	<i>Restaurants and Other Eating Places</i>	11400	15051	3651	32.0
6113	<i>Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools</i>	24204	27112	2908	12.0
6219	<i>Other Ambulatory Healthcare Services</i>	835	1512	677	81.1
5617	<i>Services to Buildings and Dwellings</i>	2044	2730	686`	33.6
5614	<i>Business Support Services</i>	1116	1729	613	54.9
6111	<i>Elementary and Secondary Schools</i>	9582	10603	1021	10.7
3327	<i>Machine Shops, Turned Products and Screw, Nut and Bolt Manufacturing</i>	519	827	308	59.3
2371	<i>Utility System Construction</i>	674	1080	406	60.2
2131	<i>Support Activities for Mining</i>	1488	2208	720	48.4
5419	<i>Other Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services</i>	909	1441	532	58.5
4450	<i>Food and beverage stores (4451 and 4452 only)</i>	3559	4000	441	12.4
7211	<i>Traveler Accommodation</i>	1199	1604	405	33.8
2382	<i>Building Equipment Contractors</i>	2211	2326	115	5.2
4442	<i>Lawn and Garden Equipment and Supplies Stores</i>	616	967	351	57.0
4238	<i>Machinery, Equipment, and Supplies Merchant Wholesalers</i>	730	1013	283	38.8
5417	<i>Scientific Research and Development Services</i>	720	1099	379	52.6
4441	<i>Building Material and Supplies Dealers</i>	1346	1554	208	15.5
2373	<i>Highway, Street and Bridge Construction</i>	880	1204	324	36.8
7139	<i>Other Amusement and Recreation Industries</i>	1223	1717	494	40.4

<i>NAICS</i>	<i>Industry</i>	<i>2020 Annual Average Employment</i>	<i>2030 Annual Average Employment</i>	<i>Number change 2020-2030</i>	<i>Percent Growth 2020 - 2030</i>
5416	<i>Management, Scientific, and Technical Consulting Services</i>	641	941	300	46.8
8111	<i>Automotive Repair and Maintenance</i>	924	1090	166	18.0
6241	<i>Individual and Family Services</i>	657	905	248	37.7
2389	<i>Other Specialty Trade Contractors</i>	955	1285	330	34.6
5611	<i>Office Administrative Services</i>	743	989	246	33.1
6216	<i>Home Health Care Services</i>	1337	1565	228	17.1
4471	<i>Gasoline Stations</i>	1526	1975	449	29.4
4411	<i>Automobile Dealers</i>	1372	1606	234	17.1
5413	<i>Architectural, Engineering and Related Services</i>	927	1085	158	17.0
6244	<i>Child Day Care Services</i>	678	780	102	15.0
4413	<i>Automotive Parts, Accessories and Tire Dealers</i>	569	740	171	30.1
5415	<i>Computer Systems Design and Related Services</i>	1178	1471	293	24.9
2361	<i>Residential Building Construction</i>	683	842	159	23.3
5411	<i>Legal Services</i>	763	940	177	23.2
6212	<i>Offices of Dentists</i>	656	802	146	22.3
3370A1	<i>Furniture and Related Product Manufacturing</i>	714	855	141	19.7
2381	<i>Building Foundation, and Exterior Contractors</i>	790	927	137	17.3
4481	<i>Clothing Stores</i>	665	754	89	13.4
5412	<i>Accounting, Tax Preparation, Bookkeeping, and Payroll Services</i>	603	683	80	13.3
4240A	<i>Merchant Wholesalers, Non-durable Goods</i>	882	996	114	12.9
6211	<i>Offices of Physicians</i>	1868	2091	223	11.9

<i>NAICS</i>	<i>Industry</i>	<i>2020 Annual Average Employment</i>	<i>2030 Annual Average Employment</i>	<i>Number change 2020-2030</i>	<i>Percent Growth 2020 - 2030</i>
3320A	<i>Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing</i>	1416	1509	93	6.6

Not showing up on the chart of industries expected to experience growth are Oil and Gas Extraction, which is projected to decline. Support Activities for Mining will increase. Services industries are expected to have substantial gains in employment. For example, the Food and Beverage Stores, Restaurants and Other Eating Places and Colleges, Universities and Professional Schools categories are expected to see an increase of 32.0% to 12.0%. The services sector is projected to generate a majority of net new jobs through 2030. The government sector, which includes employment at Texas A&M as well as public schools, is also likely to experience significant job expansion.

Target occupations are presented in the table below. These are the occupations available for WIOA training subsidies in the Brazos Valley for eligible customers. The list presents several new occupations for the 2023 plan. New occupations are Service Unit Operators and Heating, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers. The criteria for consideration as a target occupation are at least 10 average openings annually, a \$14.00 an hour wage or more, and training of two (2) years or less. For the occupations requiring a Bachelor's degree, the Board may cover the costs of the last two years of training. Many of the occupations that show a Bachelor's degree also have one (1) and two (2) year certificate programs that gain individuals entry level jobs in the occupation. Occupations that do not appear to show sufficient annual openings (10 or more) may be included in the target list if evidence of potential future openings are submitted to the Board as "local wisdom".

Target Occupations List

<i>SOC</i>	<i>Occupational Title</i>
<i>11-1021</i>	<i>General and Operations Managers</i>
<i>15-1252</i>	<i>Software Developers</i>
<i>15-1232</i>	<i>Computer User Support Specialists</i>
<i>19-4021</i>	<i>Biological Technicians</i>
<i>25-2021</i>	<i>Elementary School Teachers</i>
<i>25-2022</i>	<i>Middle School Teachers</i>
<i>25-2031</i>	<i>Secondary School Teachers</i>
<i>29-1141</i>	<i>Registered Nurses</i>
<i>29-1292</i>	<i>Dental Hygienists</i>
<i>29-2034</i>	<i>Radiologic Technologists and Technicians</i>
<i>29-2042</i>	<i>Emergency Medical Technician</i>
<i>29-2052</i>	<i>Pharmacy Technicians</i>
<i>29-2055</i>	<i>Surgical Technologists</i>
<i>29-2061</i>	<i>Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses</i>
<i>31-2021</i>	<i>Physical Therapy Assistants</i>
<i>31-9091</i>	<i>Dental Assistants</i>
<i>31-9092</i>	<i>Certified Medical Assistant</i>
<i>33-3012</i>	<i>Correctional officers and Jailers</i>
<i>33-3051</i>	<i>Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers</i>
<i>39-9011</i>	<i>Childcare Worker</i>
<i>43-3031</i>	<i>Bookkeeping, Accounting and Auditing Clerks</i>
<i>43-6013</i>	<i>Medical Secretary</i>
<i>47-1011</i>	<i>Supervisors of Construction and Extraction Workers</i>
<i>47-2031</i>	<i>Carpenters</i>
<i>47-2051</i>	<i>Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers</i>
<i>47-2073</i>	<i>Operating Engineers and Other Construction Equipment Operators</i>
<i>47-2111</i>	<i>Electricians</i>
<i>47-2152</i>	<i>Plumbers, Pipe Fitters and Steamfitters</i>
<i>47-5013</i>	<i>Service Unit Operators</i>
<i>49-3023</i>	<i>Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics</i>
<i>49-9021</i>	<i>Heating, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers</i>
<i>49-9041</i>	<i>Industrial Machinery Mechanics</i>
<i>49-9051</i>	<i>Electrical Power-Line Installers and Repairers</i>
<i>51-4041</i>	<i>Machinists</i>
<i>51-4121</i>	<i>Welders, Cutters, Solderers and Brazers</i>
<i>53-3051</i>	<i>Bus Drivers, School</i>
<i>53-3032</i>	<i>Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers</i>

Population Change 2020 to 2030 Brazos Valley WDA				
<i>Area</i>	<i>Population Source</i>	<i>2020 Population</i>	<i>203 Population Estimate</i>	<i>% change</i>
<i>Brazos County</i>	<i>United States Census Bureau</i>	<i>233,848</i>	<i>242,014</i>	<i>3.4</i>
<i>Burleson County</i>	<i>United States Census Bureau</i>	<i>17,860</i>	<i>18,657</i>	<i>4.5</i>
<i>Grimes County</i>	<i>United States Census Bureau</i>	<i>29,430</i>	<i>30,754</i>	<i>4.4</i>
<i>Leon County</i>	<i>United States Census Bureau</i>	<i>15,731</i>	<i>16,209</i>	<i>3.0</i>
<i>Madison County</i>	<i>United States Census Bureau</i>	<i>13,414</i>	<i>13,661</i>	<i>1.8/</i>
<i>Robertson County</i>	<i>United States Census Bureau</i>	<i>16,771</i>	<i>17,153</i>	<i>2.2</i>
<i>Washington County</i>	<i>United States Census Bureau</i>	<i>35,805</i>	<i>36,159</i>	<i>0.9</i>
<i>Total</i>		<i>362,909</i>	<i>374,637</i>	<i>3.23</i>

B. Labor Force Analysis and Trends

According to the Texas Workforce Commission report the unemployment rate for the Brazos Valley in September 2022 was 3.2% compared to 4.2% for the State of Texas. In September 2020, the unemployment rate for the Brazos Valley dropped to 5.9% compared to 7.7% for the State of Texas. Due to employment closures caused by the COVID-19 virus, the Texas unemployment rate and the Brazos Valley unemployment rate dropped dramatically, but is now making a comeback.. The U.S. unemployment rate for the same period was 7.7%. The civilian labor force in Brazos Valley increased to 184,900 as of December 2022.

Some industries experienced an increase in employment.

Population table above, shows an overall population growth of 3.2% for 2022 (Texas Demographic Center) and TWC Tracer LMI projections. The bulk of this growth is in Burleson County. Grimes and Washington had growth at 4.4% and 0.9% respectively. Madison County's increase was 1.8%. Leon and Robertson Counties had a growth increase of 3.0% and 2.2% respectively

The ethnicity of the Brazos WDA consists of 79.6% Anglo, 11.5% Black, and 27.5% Hispanic. Projections for 2025 show an increase in Hispanics with 52.51% Anglo, 11.98% Black and 28.87% Hispanic.

The estimated total number of homeless persons across reporting categories is 754 for the year 10/1/2015 – 9/30/2016 in our seven counties per Twin City Mission Inc. The categories include persons in families in emergency shelters; persons in families in transitional housing, individuals in emergency shelters, individuals in transitional housing and individuals in permanent supportive housing. Forty two percent were ages 13 to 61.

According to Texas Workforce Commission estimates for September 2022 Brazos Valley had a civilian labor

force of 182,819. Unemployment for September 2022 was 62313.4% of the labor force. Data by county is presented below. Madison and Leon Counties experienced a significantly higher unemployment rate at 5.18% and 4.51%. The table below presents labor force data by county.

Working with the Blinn College District to develop more training opportunities that the college district can deliver for jobseekers, they identified Early Childhood Education Worker, Mason Workers, Jailers and Correctional Officer and Emergency Medical Technician. All of these occupations have at least 10 job openings for jobseekers. Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers-SOC Code 49-2022 and Geological and Petroleum Technicians – SOC Code 19-4041 were removed from the list. CTE training for the added occupations were more viable for the region for training opportunities. Texas Labor Analysis, Texas Wages and the Texas Auto Coder were used to extrapolate data.

Civilian Labor Force Estimates for Brazos Valley WDA

AREA	CLF	EMP	UNEMP	RATE
BRAZOS	128,477	124,512	3965	3.08
BURLESON	8,857	8,539	318	3.60
GRIMES	11,460	10,943	517	4.51
LEON	6,057	5,743	314	5.18
MADISON	4,741	4,536	205	4.32
ROBERTSON	7,971	7,665	306	3.83
WASHINGTON	15,256	14,650	606	3.97
WDA TOTAL	182,818	176,587	6,231	3.4

Source: United States Census September 2022

Education plays a key role in obtaining employment at a self-sufficient wage. US Census data estimates indicate the educational attainment of person 25 years of age and above is below the national average for attainment of a high school diploma. The region’s educational attainment ranges from a high of 87.2 percent, near the national average, to a low of 80.6% in Grimes County. The Texas average is 83.76%. Five counties in the region are below the state average. The presence of Texas A&M University in Brazos County contributes to the higher attainment percentage for Brazos Valley. Overall, there is opportunity to increase the region’s workforce. This factor could weigh negatively for companies seeking a skilled educated workforce and result in the region being less competitive in national and global markets. Workforce education levels are a key component for location decisions for expanding companies. The workforce will partner with area ISDs to focus on improving the high school graduation rates in all counties, especially the ones with a higher percentage that is below the national average. All Washington County information is for Brenham, Texas only.

High school graduate or higher, percent of persons age 25+, by County Brazos WDA

County	Educational Attainment County.	Educational Attainment US
Brazos	88.7	88.983.7
Burleson	82.8	88.93.7
Grimes	81.7	83.88.97
Leon	83.4	83.788.9
Madison	78.3	83.788.9
Robertson	84.9	83.788.9
Washington	84.7	83.788.9

Source: US Census ACS 5 year estimates 2017 - 2021

Percent of Persons with a Disability under 65 Years of Age

County	% Persons with Disability under age 65 by County	US Average
<i>Brazos</i>	6.5	8.7
<i>Burleson</i>	9.7	8.7
<i>Grimes</i>	9.1	8.7
<i>Leon</i>	12.5	8.7
<i>Madison</i>	12.7	8.7
<i>Robertson</i>	13.7	8.7

Source: US Census ACS 5 Year Survey

The table above presents the percentage of persons with a disability under age 65 by county in the Brazos WDA. The region has significantly greater proportion of individuals with disabilities than the national average, except for Brazos Valley. The US average is 8.7%. This increase in the number of job seekers with disabilities in the region shows that attention is needed to add additional accommodations for training for skills in the workplace.

Percent of Persons in Poverty by County

County	% Persons in Poverty	US Average
<i>Brazos</i>	22.6	11.6
<i>Burleson</i>	14.4	11.6
<i>Grimes</i>	16.1	11.6
<i>Leon</i>	16.3	11.6
<i>Madison</i>	17.5	11.6
<i>Robertson</i>	16.9	11.6
<i>Washington</i>	14.1	11.6

Source: US Census ACS 5 Year Survey

Poverty rates for the Brazos WDA are presented in the table above. The national average for persons in poverty is 11.6%. All counties in the Brazos Valley Region exceed the national poverty rate. The Texas average is 14.2%. Six of the seven counties in the region exceed the state rate for percent of persons in poverty. The more urbanized Brazos County is experiencing nearly double the national rate. This represents a significant challenge for workforce development programs and social services. Individuals most in need of skills training are often unable to afford attending training without some form of income support or stipend, which are generally not available in workforce programs.

Number of Veterans in Brazos Valley WDA by County

County	Number of Veterans
<i>Brazos</i>	8156
<i>Burleson</i>	961
<i>Grimes</i>	1600
<i>Leon</i>	1173
<i>Madison</i>	670
<i>Robertson</i>	1027
<i>Washington</i>	840
<i>Total</i>	14427

Source: US Census ACS 5 Year Survey

The table above presents the number of veterans by county in the Brazos Valley WDA by county. The region has a significant population of veterans with 56.50% of the total in Brazos County alone. Workforce development services to veterans are a priority at both the local, state and national levels. In addition to skills needs some veterans also face barriers to employment due to drug use, PTSD, homelessness and psychological problems affecting their ability to complete training and return to the labor force. While many veterans have social and family networks and resources to tap into for support, some veterans need special targeted assistance both for skills training and for referral to other programs to address their barriers. The Board works with Veterans programs to ensure that veterans receive assistance to become gainfully employed and address difficulties with adjusting to civilian life.

Part 3: Core Programs

A. Workforce Development System

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Adult, Dislocated Worker, In School Youth, Out of School Youth, Child Care Services (CCS), Employment Services (ES), Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF or Choices), Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), Adult Education Literacy Program (AEL), and TANF Non-Custodial Parent (NCP).

The core workforce development programs that WSBVB provides through the workforce center system include the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), providing Adults, Dislocated Workers and Youth with skills training, job search assistance, support services, counseling, case management, work experience and placement services; Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF or Choices program), assisting Choices participants in gaining employment experience, workforce maturity, and access to placement in a job paying a self-sustaining wage; Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), providing program recipients with job search assistance and referral and placement in jobs paying a living wage; Adult Education Literacy Program (AEL) that supports an increase in education and work-related outcomes including secondary and post-secondary training outcomes; and TANF Non-Custodial Parent (NCP), aiding non-custodial parents with education, job training and workforce services. These programs are supported by the Child Care Services Program, which provides childcare assistance to families with parent(s) who are working or in training.

The State Plan identifies a number of strategies tied to individual state agencies objectives to meet the Texas Workforce Investment Council's State Plan. The vision is "an innovative, world-class Texas workforce system ensures success in the dynamic global economy." The mission of the workforce development system is to position Texas as a global economic leader by:

- *Growing and sustaining a competitive workforce*
- *Aligning programs with employer needs*
- *Integrating system services*
- *Leveraging partnerships*

The State Plan identifies four goals for its partner agencies. Below is each goal statement and how WSBVB will support each goal.

Goal 1: Focus on Employers

Board Response: *WSBVB focuses on employer needs through the establishment of its business services unit, through the operation of labor exchange services under the Wagner Peyser Act, through employer membership on its board and through its work with employers to outreach veterans to find quality employment. The Board workforce center staff interacts with employers daily with one dominating mission – to listen to what employers to understand their business needs and to ensure that information is disseminated to staff and Board members who make program decisions. The Board works with providers of career and technical education programs to ensure that graduates connect with the workforce center system and gain the competencies needed to meet employer job skill requirements.*

Goal 2: Engage in Partnerships

Board Response: The Board collaborates with the education community to provide funding for occupational skills training resulting in creating a pipeline that can move secondary school graduates into the labor market or on to post-secondary education opportunities. The Board works with Vocational Rehabilitation Services to ensure that job seekers with disabilities have access to employment opportunities and access to training, workforce center services and job placement. The Board also works with community partners to assist customers with any life challenges they experience while they are working or in training. The Board makes referrals to agencies that have the resources and programs necessary to address barriers to employment that are not specifically addressed in workforce development programs. The Board collaborates with the Adult Education Program to provide support for participants in high school equivalency programs and limited English proficiency programs.

Goal 3: Align System Elements

Board Response: The Board works to align programs to ensure all students can complete areas of study, earn credentials and gain employment skills. The Board gives special emphasis is given to students and youth with disabilities to position them for training and employment or post-secondary education. The Board will work with education entities to support the development of career and technical education courses that will enhance transition services for students and youth with disabilities and allow them the ability to assimilate into employment and postsecondary opportunities.

Goal 4: Improve and Integrate Programs

Board Response: The focus of this goal is to accelerate employment and improve efficiencies through shared resources to create new opportunities for customers and stakeholders. The TWC strategy is directed at expanding self-service and distance learning options for the delivery of workforce services and professional development for childcare providers. TWC is charged with enhancing the ease of access to labor market information tools. The Board supports improvements in efficiencies to provide services to rural areas and to improve self-service capabilities within the workforce center system. Local jobseekers and employers use WorkInTexas to access information that facilitates the connection between employer and job seeker. Employers can discover jobseeker skills and capabilities. Jobseekers can understand the requirements for becoming a successful job candidate. The Board works with Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the Adult Education and Literacy staff to incorporate their services into the workforce development system in the region.

B. Core Programs—Expand Access, Facilitate Development, and Improve Access

The core programs that WSBVB has planning and oversight responsibility for include the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Child Care Services (CCS), Employment Services (ES), Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF or Choices), Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), Adult Education Literacy (AEL), and TANF Non-custodial Parent (NCP). The priority of service is focused on adult career and training services for recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient as well as veterans, spouses of veterans, and foster children. An additional focus is creating opportunities for the engagement of out of school youth in the labor market. In order to carry out the plan for delivery of the core programs WSBVB selects contractors through a competitive procurement process. That process results in one or more contractors charged with providing access to workforce development and career and training assistance for employers and job seekers. Through local partnerships, the Board is able to ensure that youth customers are outreached and barriers addressed. Partnerships with employer organizations as well as industry groups ensures that the Board contractors understand employer needs and can address those needs through their program design and workforce center system operation.

Key partnerships and their operational components are:

- *Area Agency on Aging – deliver workforce services for older workers*
- *Blinn College Non-Certificate Post-Secondary Career & Technical Training Provider, credit certificate and degree training – coordination of core services assessment, education and employment services*
- *Brazos Valley Aging and Disability Resource Center – access to services*
- *Brazos Valley Mental Health and Mental Retardation – referral for employment services for customers with mental health and substance abuse*
- *Department of Family and Protective Services Preparation for Adult Living Program – employment training and support services*
- *AARP Foundation SCSEP. – opportunity for older workers to train for meaningful employment*
- *Financial Fitness – financial coaching*
- *Project Unity – interagency case management*
- *Texas A&M University AgriLife Extension – facilitate of collaboration of sustainable job preparation for unemployed/underemployed youth*
- *The Brazos Valley Council on Alcohol and Substance Abuse – referral service*
- *The Office of the Attorney General – employment referral for unemployed/underemployed non-custodial parents*
- *Twin City Mission Home Partners – referral services, training and support*
- *Twin City Mission Rapid Re-Housing Program – referral services*

Each partner plays an important role in providing access to workforce development services. Partner agencies share information on customer needs, business developments, provide services to customers, and share resources where available to ensure that workforce development services are efficient and non-duplicative.

In elevating the One-Stop Career Center operation of the workforce center, our new contractor will work on and off site with employers to emphasize the critical development of partners to respond to the urgent need to fill vacancies. The Board will work with the workforce contractor to develop a seamless integrated workforce development system to assist employers in upskilling their employees by promoting workforce development systems that emphasize education and skilled trade opportunities that increase flexibility of services, improve career pathways and develop technical education and vocational opportunities. The Board and workforce center staff will work with employers to identify areas to improve service delivery and places we can share best practices. Part 4: One-Stop Service Delivery

A. One-Stop Service Delivery System

The Board encourages employers to work with area training providers to ensure that training meets the employer's needs and such training is within the capacity of the training provider to implement. Tracking of current performance in graduation rates and job placements is one method the Board uses to determine the effectiveness of training programs. In addition, both the local community college and area employers are represented on the Board.

- **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.**

A large portion of the Region's populations lives in areas that do not have existing communications infrastructure. The typical average revenue per user is low, and the rural environment poses numerous economical and operational difficulties such as rough terrain, limited power supply and dearth of skilled labor. However, the Board collaborates with the Brazos Valley Council of Governments Brazos Valley 2020 Vision to provide broadband internet service to the rural workforce centers. Many of the services offered by the Workforce Center are available via the internet. This partnership allows customers to access workforce services such as WorkInTexas (WIT) and other TWC and workforce center websites for information about employment and available services. The Brazos Valley Council of Government website also has a wealth of information concerning programs offered. Workforce Solutions of the Brazos Valley has a robust website, bvjobs.org, which offers an abundance of information on programs and services available at the workforce centers in the region. There is information on the resources at the workforce center, labor market and career information, job search tools, links and resources, and the events calendar, which features job fairs, employer hiring events, and other events related to employment in the Brazos Valley.

The Workforce Center Facebook and Twitter pages offer live hiring events and information about Workforce Center training and events, recent job postings and informational employment articles that assist jobseekers with job readiness skills, interviewing skills and resume development.

- **How entities within the one-stop delivery system, including the one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA §188 (related to Non-Discrimination), 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

The Board's internal monitoring ensures that its activities are in strict compliance with all non-discrimination and ADA requirements. The Texas Workforce Commission also periodically monitors for EEO requirements to include ADA accessibility requirements for physical facilities. Any deficiencies are noted and immediately addressed in a corrective action plan to bring the deficiency up to compliance. Staff is trained in the EEO and ADA requirements. Required notices are prominently posted in public areas of the workforce centers as well as staff office area. Individuals assessed as needing accommodation for their specific disability are provided that accommodation through the workforce center services or through a partner agency, such as Vocational Rehabilitation Services or the Aging & Disability Resource Center. Accommodations are noted in the customer's employment plan and in their case notes.

- **The roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners**

Every one-stop partner in the workforce center system plays a role in providing services to shared customers. Depending on specific grant requirements, partner agencies provide services that may not be available through workforce development funding, such as adaptive equipment for disabled jobseekers, special counseling for personal crises management and financial literacy counseling. Partners support the overall service blend to customers entering the workforce center system. If necessary, the Board works with partner agencies to pay for a share of the costs of the workforce center systems physical space, maintenance and utilities.

B. Coordination of Wagner-Peyser Services

The workforce center contractor is responsible for all functions within the one-stop system. Jobseekers have access to Wagner-Peyser services and other employment services through the workforce center resources and TWC Employment Services staff. Therefore, there is no duplication of employment services provided by outside agencies. Board program coordinators oversee program operations for every aspect of the job seeking experience to ensure that the workforce center contractor manages all functions in an efficient manner. The contractor provides monthly reports of activities and developments that align with the contract work-statement. The workforce center contractor shares processes and concerns with Board members at weekly meetings.

A. Rapid Response Activity Coordination

The Board selects a contractor to provide rapid response services in coordination with TWC efforts for the population experiencing dislocating disasters, layoffs, plant closings and other events that precipitate substantial increases in unemployment in the Region. The Board procured the rapid response contractor through a competitive procurement process described in Part 3 B Core Programs.

B. Youth Activities and Services

Workforce services offer youth different tangible life experiences to prepare them for the world of work. The workforce center contractor developed a job readiness program to prepare Youth to be effective jobseekers. Youth attend the job readiness for one week. One of the eligibility requirements for participation in this program is individual TABE assessment. In School and Out of School Youth are TABE tested. Participation requires achievement of a TABE score of 8.9 or better. The emphasis is for youth to be well rounded, capable of comprehending assigned job duties, adept at following direction and being skill ready. Workforce services offer youth high school equivalency classes and remediation to assist them in obtaining a high school diploma or equivalent if needed.

The job readiness training includes the following components:

- Labor Market Information
- Work Readiness Skills (assessment)
- Proper Work Etiquette
- Skills Training/Occupational Training
- Support Services
- Employment
- Job Retention

Required youth program activities and method of access are presented below:

<i>Required Youth Activity</i>	<i>Method of Access</i>
<i>Tutoring, study skills training, drop-out prevention and recovery and achievement</i>	<i>Workforce center contractor Coordination with ISDs, juvenile justice</i>
<i>Alternative Secondary School</i>	<i>Procured contractor for on-line AEL-HSE</i>
<i>Paid and unpaid work experience with academic and occupational component</i>	<i>Workforce center contractor Public/private worksite agreements</i>
<i>Occupational skills training</i>	<i>Workforce center contractor with community colleges</i>
<i>Education/training for occupational cluster</i>	<i>Workforce center contractor with community colleges</i>
<i>Leadership development</i>	<i>Workforce center contractor</i>
<i>Supportive services</i>	<i>Board and workforce center contractor</i>
<i>Adult mentoring</i>	<i>Procured contractor</i>
<i>Follow up services</i>	<i>Workforce center contractor</i>
<i>Comprehensive guidance and counseling</i>	<i>Workforce center contractor</i>
<i>Financial literacy education</i>	<i>Procured contractor</i>
<i>Entrepreneurial skills training</i>	<i>Workforce center contractor</i>
<i>Labor market information</i>	<i>Workforce center contractor</i>
<i>Activities to prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training</i>	<i>Workforce center contractor</i>

C. Coordination with Secondary and Postsecondary Education Programs

The Board coordinates with area Independent School Districts and the community college to provide access to workforce center services for their students. These partners refer to the workforce center system. All individuals who have barriers to employment need additional assistance to remain in school need additional assistance to return to school or who seek employment. The workforce center adult education and literacy program contractor also conducts outreach to inform students about available workforce center services so the student can remain in school. Outreach efforts include posting individuals signs in neighborhoods and at business sites, stamping adult education and literacy information on outgoing utility bills, social media postings, television commercials, radio station commercials and billboards.

Child Care and Early Learning

In August 2019, TWC's Child Care Services department was promoted to division status within the Agency. The Child Care and Early Learning Division provides child care subsidy assistance to eligible low-income families with children under age 13, allowing parents to work, attend school, or participate in training. In addition to assisting families, Child Care and Early Learning helps childcare providers improve the quality of services for all children in Texas through resources and assistance.

In the Brazos Valley, Child Care Services is co-located with Workforce Center operations staff lending to a more consistent and intensely integrated partnership. When a parent who is receiving childcare subsidies loses employment, Child Care Services staff inform parents of WorkInTexas, a free online-automated job matching system, and provide the parent with a referral directly to Workforce Center staff who are able to assist them to resume participation in work, school, or training to retain childcare subsidies. Parents are provided with up to three-months to "Activity Interruption," during which time the family will continue to receive childcare assistance at the same level unless requested otherwise by the parent. Additionally, parents are provided with a referral to the Financial Fitness Center provides one-on-one financial coaching to develop healthy financial habits to gain financial stability.

The integration of our local One-Stop to include childcare as well as workforce services helps smooth employment transitions for low-income parents, supporting greater economic stability for our local families and children. In addition to the co-location of these TWC programs, the Brazos Valley Council of Governments (BVCOG) houses the following agencies and programs:

- *911 Regional Planning*
- *Adult Education & Literacy (AEL)*
- *Aging & Disability Resource Center (ARDC)*
- *Area Agency on Aging*
- *Brazos Valley Affordable Housing Corp (BVAHC)*
- *Community Action Programs*
- *County Indigent Healthcare*
- *Early Head Start & Head Start Programs*
- *Economic & Community Development*
- *Fiber Optic Broadband*
- *Financial Fitness Center*
- *GIS & Graphics*

- *HIV/Health Services*
- *Housing Choice Voucher Program*
- *Meals on Wheels*
- *Public Safety Planning*
- *Purchasing Solutions Alliance (PSA)*
- *Solid Waste Management*
- *Transportation Planning*
- *Utility Assistance*
- *Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VR)*
- *Women, Infant & Children (WIC) Nutrition Program*
- *Workforce Solutions Brazos Valley*

WSBVB is working to design a parent-centered approach to expanding the knowledge, skills, and capacity to become meaningful partners in supporting their children's positive development, due to the lack of a local office or supports for our childcare programs and families from the Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) program. ECI is a statewide program designed to support families with children ages birth to three years that have disabilities and developmental delays with a mission to help children reach their potential, are currently only available to families in our Workforce Development Area through Easter Seals of Greater Houston, LLC.

Each Fiscal Year, Workforce Solutions Brazos Valley Board sets aside a minimum of 2 percent of its yearly child care allocation for quality initiatives ensuring that priority is given to quality child care initiatives benefiting child care facilities that are working toward Texas Rising Star (TRS) certification or are actively TRS providers. In FY'21, over 11 percent of the total quality budget was allocated to support infants and toddlers in the Brazos Valley by providing developmentally appropriate equipment and learning materials.

The Texas Rising Star (TRS) program encourages providers to exceed minimum licensing requirements and improve quality of services in order to achieve a higher star-level recognition and receive higher reimbursement rates for serving children participating in the childcare subsidy program. In 2019, a workgroup with members representing state agencies, Boards, childcare providers and other stakeholders assembled to review the Texas Rising Star guidelines and assessments and began training on program changes in January of 2021 with an effective date of April 1, 2021. The new Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) strengthened program certification standards and professional development requirements to better help families identify quality early learning programs based on a 2-star, 3-star, or 4-star recognition levels.

Texas Rising Star Mentors provide technical assistance to providers working to become TRS-certified and to TRS providers working to attain higher levels of certification. TRS Assessors are responsible for conducting on-site assessments of providers to determine compliance with TRS standards. The enhanced system includes observations of teachers, mentoring of directors, one-on-one training, coaching, providing resources/feedback and recommending corrective actions. TWC provides funds to TEA to be used by CLI to develop guides, tools, statewide online and in-person trainings, and consumer education materials to support TRS Provider Certification Guidelines content and outreach. Through quality funds WSBVB provides childcare staff and directors access to professional development and training, educational equipment, and other subsidies to motivate providers to improve their services. All professional development and training opportunities are designed to provide attendees with information, tools, and resources to improve the quality of early care experiences. Promoting the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of children, including those efforts related to

nutrition and physical activity, using scientifically based, developmentally appropriate, and age-appropriate strategies are all essential elements of every-day child care.

Since 2016, Workforce Solutions Brazos Valley Board has collaborated with the Blinn College Child Development Department to provide the Child Development Higher Education Scholarship and one-on-one assistance to eligible students in pursuit of higher education. Recipients of the scholarship have the opportunity to earn up to an Associate's degree from Blinn College, while allowing those looking to obtain only their CDA Credential or a Child Care Worker Certificate (CCWC) to earn non-expiring college credit hours along their career pathway. This stackable approach to the certificates that WSBVB subsidizes is an important piece to growing and professionalizing the child care industry and local labor force. Other opportunities for CDA and other professional growth options offered on a statewide level through T.E.A.C.H., Federal Pell Grants, CLI Engage, the CDA Council, and various other sources are provided as resources to child care programs and their teachers.

In 2020, WSBVB established a new partnership and pilot program with the Blinn College Adult Education & Literacy (AEL) Program to better support our Child Development Higher Education Scholarship recipients by preparing them to pass the Texas Success Initiative Assessment 2.0 (TSIA2). Successful completion of the TSIA2 allows students to be deemed 'college ready' and eligible for higher-level courses as well as graduation with an Associates' degree.

WSBVB coordinates local trainings and professional development opportunities and provides local childcare programs with external resources for additional opportunities. These include, but not limited to Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Services, CLI at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, Texas Early Childhood Professional Development System (TECPDS) in partnership with the Texas Workforce Registry (TWR), Texas Association for the Education of Young Children (TxAEYC), Texas Early Childhood Learning Summits, Frog Street Press, and edWeb.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service http://extensiononline.tamu.edu/courses/child_care.php offers online training topics including health and safety, developmentally appropriate activities, observation and assessment, professional leadership, and supporting the development of infant and toddlers as well as for Children with Special Needs.

CLI's Engage <https://cliengage.org/static/> is a comprehensive professional development and child progress-monitoring platform, provides resources for professional development content, child progress monitoring tools, and classroom observation tools. These resources help providers to implement developmentally appropriate, evidence-based curricula and to design learning environments that align with early learning guidelines. In an effort to improve the quality of infant and toddler care, CLI offers a series of web-based training modules highlighting early learning guidelines, social and emotional skills, and cognitive development. The modules provide caregivers with lessons that promote child development across all early learning domains. Developmental checklists allow caregivers to screen for developmental delays against important milestones in the early learning guidelines. These online tools and resources are available at no cost to all early childhood teachers at TRS providers and Head Start programs.

Texas Early Childhood Professional Development System (TECPDS) <https://tecpds.org/wp/> was designed to house education and employment history as well as training hours and certificates as a support to the Texas Workforce Registry (TWR), a web-based application for early childhood education (ECE) professionals who work with children birth to age 8. The TECPDS system supports early childhood professionals by providing them with resources and tools to help meet their professional development needs. TECPDS defines professional development as any opportunity that enhances the knowledge and skills of those working with young children, including training, education, and employment. The four components of TECPDS are Core Competencies, Texas Trainer Registry, Texas Workforce Registry, and the Early Childhood Career Lattice. Beginning in FY'21, WSBVB will have

the opportunity to work more closely with TECPDS staff as well as local childcare providers to support professionalization of childcare by increasing provider and teacher knowledge of this free resource. The Board submits quarterly reports to TWC regarding the activities funded through the 2 percent quality expenditures and the progress made toward improving the quality of childcare programs through a mix of provider financial aid and other quality activities that best meet the needs of the local area. These reports and expenditures are monitored annually internally, by an independent 3rd party reviewer, as well as TWC's SRM department to ensure that the funds are being spent in accordance with applicable federal and state statutes, regulations, and rules. The provision of financial aid to providers' caregivers and provider facilities, scholarships, bonuses, reimbursements for training expenses and other supports are continually adapted to meet the needs of local childcare programs. To improve access to quality childcare for low-income families, base reimbursement rates were increased by 2 percent for all providers in FY'19 and additional rate increases were implemented in FY'20. Quality investments implemented in FY'19 and FY'20 included enhancements for quality and school-readiness, health and safety, and professional development opportunities that focus on building up a well-qualified workforce of early learning teachers. WSBVB leverages local public expenditures in the workforce areas as match for federal CCDF matching funds by working with public institutions of higher education, ISDs, and local governments to certify local public expenditures for direct childcare services to low-income families and for childcare quality improvement activities. The federal CCDF matching funds resulting from the public certifications are utilized to increase direct childcare services to CCDF-eligible families targeted to meet the childcare needs in workforce areas. The funds are also used to expand quality improvement activities in the workforce areas. In the Brazos Valley, Kids Klub and College Station ISD have been a long-standing partner and resource in this capacity. In FY'19, TWC awarded TEA funds to support planning grants to build partnerships between school districts and early learning programs to expand pre-K service capacity. Through this grant, early learning programs achieving a 4-star certification level under TWC's Texas Rising Star program have an opportunity to collaborate with our local independent school districts and charter schools to expand quality prekindergarten services to children three to four years old. WSBVB works with TWC to coordinate services for prekindergarten and school age children by providing open lines of communication with the Texas Education Agency (TEA), local independent school districts (ISDs). Child Care-Pre-K Partnership goals include the following:

- 1. Prepare children to be Kindergarten ready by expanding access to high quality prekindergarten programs for low income families;*
- 2. Offer full-day, full-year child care services; - Increase the number of children accessing high-quality care;*
- 3. Allow school districts and private child care providers to leverage assets and share resources such as professional development, facilities, and staff;*
- 4. Provide an opportunity for TRS 4-star private child care provider to sustain their business by offering financial stabilities;*
- 5. Support and expand continuity and quality of prekindergarten instruction;*
- 6. Assist private child care providers to gain qualified staff; and*
- 7. Provide for shared standards of quality (curricular, instructional, assessment, professional development, instructional coaching, and family engagement) between school districts and private childcare providers.*

The coordination and collaboration between Head Start and CCDF is a new collaboration that provides comprehensive child care and development services for children who are eligible for both programs. In 2019, Brazos Valley Council of Governments (BVCOG), the managing authority for WSBVB, incorporated a variety of community programs including the Early Head Start and Head Start programs for our region. This shift puts Brazos Valley in a unique position to implement a collaborative program to ensure seamless services and provide shared resources ensuring that the provisions of full working day, full calendar year comprehensive services are available as set forth by sections 640(g)(1)(D) and (E); 640(h); 641(d)(2)(H)(v); and 642(e)(3) of the Head Start Act.

WSBVB continues to work with local ISDs to provide wrap-around childcare to serve the needs of working parents with eligible children. Examples of partnerships include, but are not remain limited to:

- 1. AlphaBest Education (<https://www.alphabest.org/bryantx>)
 - a. Available to Bryan ISD Elementary and Intermediate School families**
- 2. Dual After School Program (D.A.S.P.) (<https://www.dualafterschool.com/>)
 - a. Available to Bryan ISD Johnson Elementary School families and International Leadership of Texas, College Station K-10 Charter School families**
- 3. Kids Klub (<https://sites.google.com/a/csisd.org/the-kids-klub/>)
 - a. Available and solely offered through College Station ISD**
- 4. Lil' Rattler Academy
www.navasotaisd.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=1548123&type=d&pREC_ID=1674288
 - a. Available to families in Navasota ISD**

WSBVB plans to continue to work with TWC and TEA to expand these partnerships within our local community by working closely with local ISDs and childcare providers to understand the availability of childcare in their workforce areas and to formulate strategies to expand availability by leveraging additional quality funds and resources.

A. Transportation and Other Support Services

The Board's support services policy provides for assistance with transportation by distributing debit cards for gas cards or bus passes to jobseekers. In some cases, vehicle repair is authorized so customers can participate in training activities or job search. Brazos Valley Council of Government, as the fiscal agent, pays support services and payments are coordinated/tracked/managed through the workforce center contractor. The Child Care Services program contractor provides childcare services to customers. Board staff serves on the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee.

B. Coordination of Adult Education and Literacy (AEL)

WSBVB is the Title II grantee for the Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) Program as well as the Title I grantee for WIOA activities in the Region. The workforce center contractor and the adult education and literacy program contractor coordinate access to these services through a referral system. The AEL contractor has labor market information, workforce program applications, and a career navigator to advocate for students across program lines. The AEL contractor uses the WIOA subcontractor for customer support, recruitment, testing, space, and coordinated case management for joint customers. The WIOA subcontractor refers any customers experiencing education and literacy barriers to employment to the AEL contractors for remediation and tutoring. Both contractors participate in monthly staff meetings to triage joint cases. The Board also works with local libraries to provide access to students for distance and virtual learning services.

The Board AEL contractor reviews AEL Program applications for eligibility to determine if the student is an English language learner or does not have a high school diploma.

Part 7: Fiscal Agent, Grants, and Contracts

A. Fiscal Agent

The WSBVB fiscal and administrative agent is the Brazos Valley Council of Government as determined by the partnership agreement.

B. Sub-Grants and Contracts

WSBVB uses a competitive procurement process to select contractors for WIOA activities. The Board releases a Request for Proposal (RFP) for operation of the workforce center system in the Brazos Valley WDA. The RFP contains the requirements and restrictions concerning the contracting and operation of the programs as well as the scoring criteria and timeline for the procurement. The RFP details the submission requirements and narrative and budget instructions. The Board maintains a "bidders list" of vendors who may be interested in submitting a proposal. A notice of the availability of the procurement is posted in local newspapers, on the BVCOG web page and sent to vendors on the bidders list. A "bidders' conference" is held either on-site or by telephone to discuss the RFP elements

and to answer questions bidders may have about the RFP. A question/answer document is posted on the BVCOG web page after the bidders' conference and emailed to vendors on the bidders list. Proposals are due on an assigned due date and time. Late proposals are not accepted.

An independent evaluation team reviews proposals submitted in response to the RFP. This team evaluates the proposals using a standardized scoring instrument based on the RFP scoring criteria and instructions. The independent evaluation team submits its report to the Board detailing the evaluation score and strengths and weaknesses of each proposal. The Board reviews the evaluation report and acts on the evaluation team and staff recommendation to select a proposer for contract negotiations. If negotiations are successful, the successful respondent signs a contract for the services requested.

The Board notifies unsuccessful Proposers about the action taken by the Board. Proposers may elect to receive a debriefing on the evaluation of their proposal. Vendors that want to appeal the decision may follow the Board's appeal process within a certain time from the date of Board action on the procurement.

Part 8: Performance

A. Board Performance Targets

The performance measures for WIOA are negotiated with TWC by the WSBVB Executive Director based on local information acquired by TWC that can affect performance measures, such as the downturn of a particular industry and the downturn's impact on workers attaining re-employment within 10 weeks. The performance of the WSBVB fiscal agent, BVCOG, is reviewed by the Board's certified public accountant (CPA) annual review, the TWC financial teams annual monitoring and the BVCOG annual financial A-133 audit. The chief elected officials review the BVCOG audit and the WSBVB board members review the Board's CPA and TWC financial monitoring report. An initial and annual evaluation of eligible training providers (ETP) is done following TWC requirements concerning performance by Board staff to remain on the training provider list for the area. The Board CPA, Board programmatic monitor and the TWC Sub recipient monitoring team monitor ETPs used by consumers to ensure they are the ETP approved. The following performance measures were set in accordance with WIOA § 116(c):

Adult Employed Q2 Post Exit – 72.0%

Adult Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit - \$6500.00

Adult Employed Q4 Post Exit – 79.5%

Adult Credential Rate – 84.6%

Dislocated Worker Employed Q2 Post Exit -76.3%

Dislocated Worker Median Earnings Q2 Post Exit - \$9400.00

Dislocated Worker Employed Q4 Post Exit – 73.1%

Dislocated Worker Credential Rate – 81.20%

Youth Employed/Enrolled Q2 Post Exit – 70.4%

Youth Employed/Enrolled Q4 Post Exit – 80.0%

Youth Credential Rate – 83.3%

Part 9: Training and Services

A. Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)

The target occupations list for occupational skills training that is funded through WIOA is posted on byjobs.org and is available in the workforce center resource rooms of WSBVB. Local labor market information is available to participants on the Texas Labor Market Career Information website at [Labor Market and Career Information \(state.tx.us\)](http://LaborMarketandCareerInformation.state.tx.us). The workforce center also distributes an informational pamphlet that includes this information. AEL Program class information is provided in each workforce center resource room, on WSBV social media and through local outreach. ONET is used for career exploration, TABE or Supra for basic skill deficiency assessment and Work Keys for basic skills assessment. The eligible training providers are listed on the TWC web site under https://apps.twc.state.tx.us/PROVIDERCERT/dispatcher?link=HREF&pageid=PUBLIC_SWL_SEAR_CH. Recruitment for contracted training is provided through the local newspaper, the WSBV social media, contact with other agency partners and by resource rooms personnel. Workforce Center case managers provide this information to jobseekers through basic career services and individualized career services.

Training Services within the parameters of the WSBV target occupations will be provided to eligible jobseekers through the TWC eligible training provider system using the WSBV individual training accounts (ITA). These training accounts have a lifetime benefit of \$10,000.00 per individual with an additional \$5,000.00 that can be used for supportive services. The dollar amount for supportive services excludes childcare services and transportation services.

If an industry in the region identifies a training need that is needed in the area and meets the WSBV criteria for self-sufficiency wages, high growth and two-year completion, a competitive procurement could be considered with the cost of the training being allocated to each participants ITA as tuition.

Adult Education and literacy activities that lead to a secondary school diploma (WIOA sec 3(3)) may be considered as training services. However, if Title I adult and dislocated worker funds are used for these activities, they must be done concurrently or in coordination with any training activities in WIOA sec 134(c) (3) (D) (i)-(vii). See 680.350. Because WSBVB is the grantee for TWC state AEL funding for the region, it is open to combining AEL funding to pay for an AEL teacher to provide contextualized high school equivalency (HSE) training while using Title I adult/dislocated funds to provide concurrent targeted occupational training for eligible WIOA participants. This training would be competitively procured contracted training. The cost of the training would be based on an individual tuition that would be charged to an ITA for particular individuals.

B. ITA Limitations

The Board limits ITA amounts to a \$15,000.00 lifetime benefit. Supportive services have a limit of \$5,000.00 per individual jobseeker. Any exceptions to this limit are described in the Board's ITA policy.

Part 10: Apprenticeship

A. Registered Apprenticeship Programs

There are no registered apprenticeship programs in this region. The Board will work with any apprenticeships that might be made available to the area.

B. Apprenticeship Texas

There are no registered apprenticeship programs in this region. The Board will work with any apprenticeships that might be made available to the area.

Part 11: Public Comment

The Workforce Board provided public notice for the updated 2021 Integrated Plan. The notice included language stating that the Integrated Plan outlined strategic program delivery for program services for WIOA, CCS, TANF, RESEA, Choices, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment Services, Veteran Services, Adult Education and Literacy Program and the Non-Custodial Parent Choices Program. The Public Notice was advertised in the regional newspaper and the Texas Register. The notice informed the public that the Workforce strategic plan would be available for review and comment at the Center for Regional Services for a period of 30 days, Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm and included the dates the plan was available for review. The notice also informed individuals that the plan could also be viewed on the Workforce Board worksite. The notice listed a contact for questions and that contact's email address.