

Refocused & Ready



Strategic Plan
2017 – 2020

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Acknowledgements

This strategic plan is a collaborative undertaking between the Cumberland Workforce Development Board of Directors, staff, and regional stakeholders representing businesses, partner organizations, education and training providers, local elected officials, and economic development entities in the region. Thomas P. Miller & Associates values the professional insights offered by participants and the exceptional logistical support provided by the staff.

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	2
Table of Contents.....	3
Executive Summary.....	4
Mission & Vision.....	5
Focus Areas	6
Goals	7
Strategies	9
Action Plans.....	12
Measuring and Monitoring Success	32
Appendices.....	33
Labor Market Information	34
Stakeholder Survey Summary	41
Strategic Planning Session Summaries.....	43
Best Practice Examples.....	48

Executive Summary

From October 2016 through September 2017, the Cumberland Workforce Development Board (CWDB, the Board) engaged in a strategic planning process to redefine their mission and a vision for the future of the regional workforce. With a refocused mission and vision, goals, strategies, and action plans were developed that will ultimately guide the organization's work over the next several years. Collaborating with Thomas P. Miller & Associates, a national workforce and economic development consulting firm, the process included participation and valuable insights from key workforce staff, economic development, education, and other workforce system partners and stakeholders.

The first phase of the strategic planning process focused on developing new mission and vision statements, identifying core focus areas, and crafting strategic goals for those focus areas. The second phase zoomed in further to define strategies, actions, and outcomes that will signal success of the goals.

During multiple facilitated strategic planning and committee work sessions, attendees and stakeholders were encouraged to think beyond programs and funding streams and take a higher level view of the area's needs. Collaboratively, the participants created new draft mission and vision statements for the CWDB to consider adopting as a means to better inform the future of the workforce system in the 13-county service area. Major focus areas identified in the process include:

- ▶ Encouraging demand-focused job training and a skilled workforce
- ▶ Streamlining workforce services, particularly Business Services
- ▶ Expanding the labor pool and labor participation rate
- ▶ Use data to focus resources on workforce development

Directly informed by the region's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT), labor market information, stakeholder survey input, and strategic planning sessions, goals were identified for each of the focus areas. Focus area committees then worked to further define how these goals would be achieved, including multiple sessions to define strategies and action plans. Detailed notes from the meetings and data informing the process are available in the Appendices.

This strategic plan is a living document and intended to serve as a guide for the future, but is not a rigid set of instructions to follow precisely. A strategic plan should grow alongside the organization, with updates to goals and further development of strategies and action steps to keep the plan in-line with the Board's new mission and vision for success.

Mission & Vision

In order to assure relevance of the CWDB's work under the new workforce law, but more importantly in a dynamic regional economy, stakeholders used a collaborative process to draft and finalize the following statements.

Mission Statement

The mission statement defines the work of the Board, its purpose and values. The Cumberland Workforce Development Board's mission is:

We partner to serve employers and employees
to develop a skilled workforce for the prosperity
of our communities.

Vision Statement

The vision statement describes what the region will look like if the Board is successful at its mission. This statement also serves as the overarching theme of the strategic plan, and is supported by all of the goals and strategies which follow. The vision for the Cumberland's strategic plan is:

The Cumberland Area is a prosperous
community with a robust talent pipeline directed
toward the needs of business and industry.

Focus Areas

Focus areas serve as the broadest priorities for the strategic plan. They originate in the big themes of the vision, help answer the question, “what do we need to pay attention to in order to realize our vision?”, and provide the basis for the plan’s goals. These key areas also support the organization’s mission statement and are informed by relevant labor market data analysis and stakeholder input during the initial phase of development.

Working groups discussed the following questions:

What are the top issues to address through this strategic plan?

What are the most important topics the workforce system should address or change in the next three to five years?

How can the system be more effectively aligned to promote the vision and mission statements?



The most critical areas of focus for the plan include:

Demand-Focused Job Training

Streamlined Business Services

Expand the Labor Pool

Utilize Data

Goals

Goals explain the Board's aim and further specify the desired results within each focus area. Goals are a tool to stretch the organization to reach beyond its current accomplishments and continually strive for more. They are intended to be aspirational but achievable and measurable. As with focus areas, goals align with the Board's vision and mission. Great goals answer the questions:

What do we want to see happen?

What does success in this focus area look like and mean to us?

The goals identified to address the four focus areas are:

Increase the number of certificates and career-focused credentials for local/regional in-demand careers in the working population by 20% by December 2020.

Develop all Business Services Teams to be the single point of contact for workforce services and provide support for businesses.

Increase the labor force participation rate of the Cumberland region (approximately 58% in 2016) by 2% annually through 2020.

Focus resources on the most effective initiatives and improve the return on our workforce investment, utilizing data to constantly improve workforce development in Kentucky.

Goals and their metrics provide the CWDB with a high-level management and monitoring tool. As strategies and tactics are implemented and the results documented, the Board can measure those results against the goals and revise or add additional goals to better reflect progress that has been made or with changing conditions.

Strategies

While goals and focus areas define what the Board wants to do, strategies begin to get into how change will be accomplished. Strategies are where the rubber begins to meet the road and translate goals into tangible, achievable results. They answer the questions:



How do we achieve this goal?

What are areas that need improvement to achieve our goals?

How can we strengthen our services to reach our goals?

Are there new initiatives that need to be created to meet our goals?

Strategies are critical to success, as they begin to outline the actual work of the

Board to promote accomplishments toward a defined mission, vision, and goals. They usually have a longer-term focus with higher ambitions than any one task could complete. The following strategies were developed for each goal:

Increase the number of certificates and career-focused credentials for local/regional in-demand careers in the working population by 20% by 2020.

Strategies:

- ▶ Identify and improve training resources available in the region to enhance skills, certificates, and credentials in need.
- ▶ Engage business and industry to identify in-demand skills and credentials to meet current and future workforce needs.
- ▶ Market in-demand careers to build a robust pipeline of skilled workers to strengthen the region.

Develop all Business Services Teams to be the single point of contact for workforce services and provide support for businesses.

Strategies:

- ▶ Effectively communicate and market the role, services, and activities of the business services team.
- ▶ Engage employers to actively use the business services, communicate future demand, and inform service delivery.
- ▶ Leverage professional development, cross training, and partnerships to increase capacity of business services.

Increase the labor force participation rate of the Cumberland region (approx. 58% in 2016) by 2% annually through 2020.

Strategies:

- ▶ Create an outreach campaign to attract new talent, with partnerships to include non-traditional partners.
- ▶ Educate business on what it will take to attract talent.
- ▶ Retain existing talent in the region.
- ▶ Provide labor market information, analysis, and insights for the region.

Focus resources on the most effective initiatives and improve the return on our workforce investment, utilizing data to constantly improve workforce development in Kentucky.

- ▶ Identify and address the organizational and structural changes that should be made to Kentucky workforce development governance to improve collaboration and accountability.
- ▶ Develop a framework and supporting goals and metrics for Kentucky workforce development programs.
- ▶ Identify gaps in the existing and longitudinal data system and determine available sources to close those gaps.
- ▶ Define and create an effective communication approach for services to ensure a consistent, quality customer experience.
- ▶ Build a stronger, more coordinated relationship between state government and local governments, institutions and workforce innovation areas.

Action Plans

The Board's mission, vision, goals, and strategies all provide guidance for the work ahead. A clear roadmap, however, is needed to assure the destination is reached and success is achieved. Detailed action plans can serve as a roadmap where each plan clearly states what the individual task is, who the responsible parties are (e.g. Champions), and the anticipated timeframe for completion. Additionally, action plans propel implementation through identification of the action's strategic benefit, potential obstacles, consequences of inaction, process milestones, and partners or resources needed. On the following pages, eight action plans are described, including important details and considerations for implementation.

Each action plan includes the following details:

- ▶ **Description of the action** – provides context and detail about the action
- ▶ **Related Strategies** – lists the applicable strategies the action applies to
- ▶ **Strategic Benefit** – describes the overall reason to accomplish the action
- ▶ **Timeline** – indicates if the action is short (less than one year), mid (one to three years), or long (more than three years) -term
- ▶ **Responsible Parties/Champions** – lists the persons or groups of individuals who will take ownership of the action
- ▶ **Required or Potential Partners** – provides a list of persons or agencies that can assist with accomplishing the action
- ▶ **Consequences of No Action** – details what might be expected if the action is not taken
- ▶ **Potential Obstacles** – describes hurdles that might hinder accomplishment
- ▶ **Process Milestones** – lists identifiable steps along the way that signal progress is being made
- ▶ **Measurable Outcomes** – provides potential measures and indicators of success

Action plans answer the question “what needs to be done?” but one action may be applicable to multiple goals and strategies. While much of this work will interact with and support other initiatives, each of these action plans is designed to be a standalone piece of the plan. Staff or other Champions can pull out individual Action Plans to use as a guide or blueprint for implementation.

ACTION: Create an Asset Map of training resources available in the region.

RELATED STRATEGY:

- ▶ Identify and improve training resources available in the region to enhance skills, certificates, and credentials in need.

An asset map of available training resources in the region informs the Workforce Development Board, staff, and committee members of the current education and training establishments, services, and contacts available in the region. A better understanding of training facilities and capacity can accelerate discussion with business and education partners related to certification and credential availability for the workforce. While the Board has an existing list of assets in the area, it is in need of updating and could be enhanced through real-time access – e.g. accessible online and searchable for partners and customers.

Strategic Benefit: In order to increase the skilled workforce, there must first be an understanding of the education resources already available in the region. This will also help to identify gaps in training and lends support to other strategies, such as expanding the Board’s outreach and engaging partners through next generation sector strategies.

Timeline: Short-term (less than 1 year)

Responsible Parties: Workforce staff, especially those with knowledge and contact with Training Providers and Career Managers, and KSD Kinetic Strategic Design.

Partners: Workforce Development Board members; Adult Education; Somerset Community College and satellite locations

Potential Obstacles: Coordination with training providers may be an obstacle depending on their availability and desire to contribute to asset mapping efforts. Keeping the asset map up to date will also depend on staff availability.

Consequences of No Action: Information will be out-of-date and staff will not know which training resources to look into when serving customers. Visitors to the website and Career Centers will continue be uninformed of available education and training offerings in the region.

Process Milestones:

- ▶ Review and build upon the existing asset document to identify new or updated resources, such as trainings presently available, ties to career pathway and key industries, and geographic location
- ▶ Cultivate potential partners by engaging and encouraging others to be training providers
- ▶ Understand the asset map is a living document and will need to be updated, particularly with real-time and searchable applications for partners or customers

- ▶ Identify and develop service-learning opportunities for individual sectors
- ▶ Detail additional in-demand courses along career pathways that are not already listed at Area Technology Centers
- ▶ Produce an asset map that is current and provides real-time information to partners and customers
- ▶ Work with KSD Kinetic Strategic Design to increase click through traffic.

Resources: Staff time; Work-Based Learning and High Quality Youth Services funding

Measurable Outcomes:

OUTCOME	METRIC/INDICATOR	DATA SOURCE
Increased awareness of available trainings in the region	Traffic to website or other trackable use of asset map # of redirects to training providers from map/website	Website analytics
Improved connections with training partners, especially in key sectors	# of communication contacts with training providers # of enrollments in asset map training programs	Internal tracking and monitoring Education and training partners

ACTION: Launch a Marketing/Outreach Campaign.

RELATED STRATEGY:

- ▶ Market in-demand careers to build a robust pipeline of skilled workers to strengthen the region.
- ▶ Effectively communicate and market the role, services, and activities of the business services team.

An effective outreach campaign can help communicate in-demand skills and increase awareness of career options and pathways – for both students and adult jobseekers. This action is particularly critical due to the recent perception that some Career Centers have closed. At the same time, an outreach campaign can market to business and industry what services the workforce development system can offer. While target audiences may differ, key messages, benchmark goals, and appropriate delivery mechanisms should be considered for each prior to launching the campaign.

Strategic Benefit: Increased efforts in outreach will lead to increased awareness of services available to employers and inform the public that offices are still open. A well thought out and delivered campaign will increase the number of employer connections as well as customers (individuals and businesses) in the door.

Timeline: Short-term (less than 1 year)

Responsible Parties: Business Services Team Lead with support from Business leader(s) as Champion(s), especially Board members.

Partners: Local and regional economic development organizations, chamber of commerce representatives; KCTCS WF Solutions (Somerset with satellite campuses); technology support (may be executed in-house or through a contract service).

Potential Obstacles: With shifting job roles and responsibilities being restructured, there may be uncertainty of branding and future guidelines. Limited financial resources and/or staff capacity may also hinder completion.

Consequences of No Action: Continued perception that Career Centers are closed will result in loss of the customer base and/or opportunities with business and jobseekers. A muddled perception of “what we do” and loss of relevance persists if marketing materials such as the website are outdated.

Process Milestones:

- ▶ Define roles and responsibilities of Champions
- ▶ Define target audiences and messaging for each
- ▶ Outline the channels for how messaging will be delivered (e.g. radio, cable access, print, web, social media, etc.)

- ▶ Work on branding with American Job Centers and Office of Unemployment
- ▶ Identify in-demand careers and clearly identify what services and activities are available
- ▶ Launch outreach campaign with different audiences (jobseekers vs. employers)
- ▶ Monitor success of media outlets, such as analytics on the website and social media

Resources: Printing and marketing associated costs; staff time; grant applications to be submitted by December 31, 2017

Measurable Outcomes:

OUTCOME	METRIC/INDICATOR	DATA SOURCE
Increased interest and access to services	# of Business inquiries	Internal monitoring and tracking
	# of Jobseeker inquiries	
Improved traffic to website and overall online presence	Website traffic	Website and social media analytics
	# of social media likes, shares, retweets, mentions, etc.	

ACTION: Facilitate Next Generation Sector Partnerships.

RELATED STRATEGY:

- ▶ Engage business and industry to identify in-demand skills and credentials to meet current and future workforce needs.
- ▶ Engage employers to actively use the business services, communicate future demand, and inform service delivery.

Efficiencies are realized when multiple business leaders in target industry sectors can openly discuss their top priorities at a single table. Next Generation Sector Partnerships¹ move the conversation of traditional sector strategies beyond industry training needs. As active listeners during business “round table”

discussions, workforce development, economic development, community organizations, locally elected officials, and educational professionals glean valuable insights not only related to in-demand skills, but other pressing needs affecting employer operations and efficacy as well.

Based stakeholder input and labor market information, potential target sectors for initial focus might include healthcare and/or manufacturing.



Strategic Benefit: When business and industry feel heard and their needs are met, businesses grow and the community prospers. Gathering all relevant parties in one room and addressing the needs of the region can streamline the workforce development “system” and allows all involved to be on the same page, headed in the same direction.

Timeline: Mid-term (1 to 3 years)

Responsible Parties: Workforce Director with CWDB Champions

Partners: CWDB members; education including K-12, post-secondary and 4-year colleges; economic development and chamber of commerce representatives, locally elected officials, community organizations and support partners (e.g. Veterans, drug and family court); others depending on who is mentioned at first convening.

¹ More information is available at <http://www.nextgensectorpartnerships.com>.
Image credit Next Generation Sector Partnerships, retrieved August 1, 2017 from <http://www.nextgensectorpartnerships.com/aboutnextgenerationpartnerships/>

Potential Obstacles: The competitive nature of businesses can lead to a perception that the largest ones have the loudest voice while smaller firms may feel silenced or intimidated. Some industries and employers may feel left out or forgotten if sector prioritization is not adequately expressed. Ensuring the right people are at the table is critical for initial and continued buy-in and participation.

Consequences of No Action: Lack of information regarding business' workforce needs and advising students and jobseekers to enter fields where there is not a demand. Businesses will continue to have unfilled positions and the Board will be unaware of issues affecting employer growth potential.

Process Milestones:

- ▶ Identify Champion(s) to ensure/monitor success
- ▶ Identify support partner representatives
- ▶ Apply for Sector and Career Pathways Fund grant (due by December 31, 2017)
- ▶ Identify and prioritize specific sectors; define the criteria for selecting those sectors
- ▶ Identify key business leaders and employer representatives to attend
- ▶ Develop and communicate the message to get key representatives at the table
- ▶ Host an orientation for support partners to ensure expectations and agendas are set
- ▶ Host initial Sector Strategy event in highest priority target sector, launched by January 1, 2018

Resources: Sector and Career Pathways funding; staff time; coordination with Office of Employment and Training

Measurable Outcomes:

OUTCOME	METRIC/INDICATOR	DATA SOURCE
Greater collaboration between business and education/training around skills in target industries	# of communications made to businesses related to Sector Strategies	Internal tracking and monitoring
	# of communications made to partner agencies related to Sector Strategies	
	# of repeat business customers	
	# of Sector Strategy events hosted	
Reduction in unfilled skilled positions within target sector(s)	# of job postings	Employers; Services such as Glassdoor or Emsi
	# of jobs filled	

ACTION: Develop a business service training program for staff and partners.

RELATED STRATEGY:

- ▶ Leverage professional development, cross training, and partnerships to increase capacity of business services.

A unified training program helps all staff know what is going on and helps them understand services available from the business services team. This is particularly true for satellite office locations. A training program or curriculum geared toward multiple audiences and partners ensures everyone understands what business services is and cultivates effective liaisons and referrals. With an increased focus on “business as a customer,” staff and partners – including nontraditional partners such as economic development organizations – are better informed of the many services offered by workforce development professionals.

Strategic Benefit: With a unified purpose and consistent service, staff and partners know what services are available while business’ needs are met in a more efficient and timely manner.

Timeline: Short-term (less than 1 year)

Responsible Parties: Workforce Director, Business Services Team Lead

Partners: Education, particularly colleges; Career and Technical Education; Vocational Rehabilitation, Veteran Services, Rapid Response; state agencies; economic development representatives

Potential Obstacles: Dedicating resources, such as staff time and funds, may be prohibitive. Identifying key components of training and garnering buy-in or commitment from others to participate will be initial hurdles to overcome.

Consequences of No Action: Unfocused staff who do not have the necessary tools coupled with shifting and unspecified job roles may result in business’ needs not being met. If all staff are not speaking the same language of business services, the organization will continue to “bail water” and have inconsistent delivery of services to employers. Businesses may not even bother to contact the workforce system and consider it a waste of their time.

Process Milestones:

- ▶ Redefine/revisit the roles and responsibilities of staff
- ▶ Check to see if current documentation is up to date and what needs to be changed
- ▶ Identify who will be developing curriculum, leading, and hosting trainings
- ▶ Create a training curriculum and resource for remote offices and partners
- ▶ Once roles are defined, discuss partnership potential with Society for Human Resources (SHRM) groups to train HR staff
- ▶ Communication and information sent on a regular basis
- ▶ Hold in-person trainings where possible
- ▶ Host or post webinar trainings for staff and partners

Resources: Possible grant funding; staff time

Measurable Outcomes:

OUTCOME	METRIC/INDICATOR	DATA SOURCE
Increased capacity to serve business and industry	Market penetration	Internal tracking and monitoring
Increased knowledge of staff and partners regarding business services	# of hosted trainings (in person or online)	

ACTION: Target high reward business.

RELATED STRATEGY:

- ▶ Engage employers to actively use the business services, communicate future demand, and inform service delivery.

With limited staff capacity, targeting high reward businesses can bring the most return on invested hours. High-reward businesses in key sectors can be identified through creating a model and establishing criteria, such as the total number of employees, total sales, and recently expanded operations or locations. Once identified, feedback from large and/or growing employers can bring attention to vital needs and emerging workforce trends.

Strategic Benefit: Engaging high reward businesses helps to strengthen and expand partnerships while building the organization's reputation. Staying connected with emerging or influential employers ultimately leads to organic growth through repeat returning business customers and/or word-of-mouth with other industry professionals.

Timeline: Mid-term (1 to 3 years)

Responsible Parties: Business Services Team Leads; Workforce Director to support and oversee

Partners: Businesses; economic development organizations; community development organizations; Society for Human Resources (SHRM) Groups

Potential Obstacles: With a newly implemented performance tracking software, keeping information up-to-date may be a challenge as staff learn and become accustomed to the new system. Setting realistic goals and defining the criteria for high reward businesses will be an initial challenge.

Consequences of No Action: Overlooking or leaving out businesses, missed opportunities, and organizational reputation when businesses are not served.

Process Milestones:

- ▶ Create a rubric to identify target businesses
- ▶ Identify target businesses and individuals within the business to contact
- ▶ Identify partners engaging with businesses
- ▶ Host a training with partners related to business service offerings
- ▶ Ongoing and continued discussions with partners and businesses

Resources: Staff time

Measurable Outcomes:

OUTCOME	METRIC/INDICATOR	DATA SOURCE
Increased capacity to serve business and industry	# of businesses contacted meeting criteria.	Internal tracking and monitoring

ACTION: Compile an Annual Talent Report.

RELATED STRATEGY:

- ▶ Provide labor market information, analysis, and insights for the region.
- ▶ Educate business on what it will take to attract talent.

A Talent Report combining labor market information and local intelligence – e.g. gathered from surveys and interviews – helps inform stakeholders of the in-demand skills, occupations, and competitive wages in the region. As part of this effort, narrowing down the most critical pieces of labor market information and effectively conveying the message to specific, target audiences helps inform businesses, economic development professionals, and others of the existing and needed talent in the region.

Strategic Benefit: With information on the latest labor market information and talent trends, businesses realize what it takes/is needed to attract and retain workers. The report can be used as a tool for targeted employer outreach and leads to a better informed community. Publishing “the right information the right way” can also improve competitiveness of region, as key stakeholders (e.g. business, economic development, workforce partners) are informed and aware of the past and future labor market trends in the region.

Timeline: Mid-term (1 to 3 years)

Responsible Parties: Workforce Director oversees, staff provides data and compiles

Partners: Individual businesses; Society for Human Resources Groups (SHRMs), economic development and chamber representatives; Business Services Teams; Community Development Block Grants Department (have data in-house)

Potential Obstacles: Due to the competitive nature, businesses may be reluctant to share wage or benefit data for fear of losing their own workforce. Overcoming this reluctance through comprehensive communication and messaging around *regional* development will be a priority.

Consequences of No Action: Without a report on the existing conditions in the region, stagnant wages, competitive disadvantage, and a lack of talent will continue. Communities will be uninformed and the status quo will persist.

Process Milestones:

- ▶ Identify key labor market information to include In-Demand Sectors
- ▶ Identify audiences for the Talent Report
- ▶ Conduct a local survey of employers
- ▶ Create a focused and informative document (print and e-version) to share
- ▶ Present information to different audiences

Resources: Staff time

Measurable Outcomes:

OUTCOME	METRIC/INDICATOR	DATA SOURCE
Better understanding of available talent and resources in the region	# of collaborative/leveraged talent development investments (financially and/or staff time in partnership)	Internal tracking and monitoring
	# inquiries from local economic development organizations	

ACTION: Partner on a Talent Attraction Campaign.

RELATED STRATEGY:

- ▶ Create an outreach campaign to attract new talent (partnerships to include non-traditional partners).

Although the CWDB does not necessarily need to spearhead the Talent Attraction Campaign effort, it can be a vital partner to others by providing up-to-date labor market information as well as details related to other services available, such as employer services for spouses. The Board can provide local insights garnered from the Annual Talent Report to enhance a regional talent attraction campaign and solidify itself as a “go-to” resource for workforce needs.

Strategic Benefit: Collaboration with local partners, such as economic development organizations, tourism, and chambers of commerce increases awareness of the workforce development system. With a focused joint effort, partnerships are strengthened while talent is retained and attracted to the region.

Timeline: Mid-term (1 to 3 years)

Responsible Parties: Board Chair / Executive Committee, State and local economic development Champions

Partners: Tourism; economic development and chamber representatives; industrial authorities, young professional groups; women’s organizations; housing and real estate representatives; education; Veterans Services

Potential Obstacles: Obtaining buy-in from all or most counties is an initial hurdle, as there is perception of competition for talent. Identifying resource needs/costs, setting realistic expectations – e.g. who will lead and what responsibilities entail – and clear communication among partners on the Campaign will be key.

Consequences of No Action: Stagnation, limited growth, or worse, decline.

Process Milestones:

- ▶ Identify champions, likely economic development and tourism staff at both state and local levels
- ▶ Provide partners labor market information and business insights
- ▶ Establish relationships and/or set expectations with partners
- ▶ Assist with implementation of Talent Attraction campaign launch

Resources: Funding options; Staff time

Measurable Outcomes:

OUTCOME	METRIC/INDICATOR	DATA SOURCE
Enhanced and expanded talent pool of skilled workers in the region	# of skilled/credentialed individuals Migration data into region	Education US Census Bureau, Services such as Emsi

ACTION: Expand outreach for specific and disadvantaged populations.

RELATED STRATEGY:

- ▶ Retain existing talent in the region.

Outreach to targeted or disadvantaged populations generally takes the form of coordinated services with partner programs and community organizations serving these groups. Improved communication and increased collaboration with partner organizations can aid specific populations, such as Veterans, individuals with disabilities, re-entry (ex-offenders), and discouraged workers enter the labor pool. Potential changes to Medicaid eligibility at the state level, particularly a requirement of 20 hours per week of employment activities, will also have ripple effects on the jobseeker services provided by the workforce system.

Strategic Benefit: Increased labor participation rate.

Timeline: Long-term (more than 3 years)

Responsible Parties: Case Managers

Partners: CWD Board members, Career Services; Business Services; Veterans Services; Vocational Rehabilitation; Office of the Blind, Adult Basic Education

Potential Obstacles: Figuring out where individuals are and how to reach them while creating momentum, and “moving the needle.” Coordination and garnering buy-in from necessary partners may be time-consuming and cause additional delays.

Consequences of No Action: Continued status quo.

Process Milestones:

- ▶ Identify Champion(s) on the Board with specific interest in disadvantage populations
- ▶ Identify contact persons with partner organizations
- ▶ Convene a meeting with partners
- ▶ Continue conversation and communication with partner agencies

Resources: WIOA funding streams for training and wrap around services; Staff time

Measurable Outcomes:

OUTCOME	METRIC/INDICATOR	DATA SOURCE
Expand and enhance the labor pool of available workers	# target population participating in labor pool WIOA Performance measures	Internal and partner

ACTION: Create a framework for the delivery of services to eligible youth.

RELATED STRATEGY: The objective assessment (measurement of academic skills, skills level, service needs and strengths) and the development of the Educational Career Plan will determine which of the 14 required program elements will be provided.

Development of the Individual Service Strategy (ISS) begins immediately with a thorough objective assessment, consisting of a measurement of academic skills, skills level assessment, service needs, and strengths. This must include identification of appropriate career pathways including: educational goals, employment goals (including non-traditional, taking into consideration career planning and the results of the objective assessment), appropriate achievement objectives and services. The ISS will specify which of the 14 program elements are needed to assist the participant in meeting his/her education and career goals. The Service Strategy is fluid and should change as the youth develops and gains skills, education and work experience.

Strategic Benefit: To assist the participant in meeting his/her educational and career goals.

Timeline: Long-term (more than three years)

Responsible Parties: Case Managers

Partners: Skills U, Office of the Blind, KCTCS, Veterans, Vocational Rehabilitation, and WIOA

Potential Obstacles: Relatively new performance tracking software, keeping paper files until the new system is validated for accuracy. Reaching into diverse populations.

Consequences of no action: Lack of information regarding Youth Services available would impact the Youth as well as employer growth. Businesses will continue to have unfilled positions and the Youth would not have the opportunities currently provided.

Process Milestones:

- ▶ Identify Champion(s) to ensure and monitor success.
- ▶ Continue conversation and communication with partner agencies, schools and Skills U.
- ▶ Develop and implement proven or promising strategies for meeting the skill need of employers through the sector partnership.
- ▶ Conduct oversight of Youth Workforce Investment activities authorized under WIOA, secs 134(C) and (D).
- ▶ Ensure the appropriate use and management of the funds.

Resources: Staff time and funding streams and supportive services provided by local Community Action Agencies, Goodwill Industries, local churches and other local entities.

14 Youth Program Elements

The objective assessment (measurement of academic skills, skills level, service needs and strengths) and the development of the Educational/Career Plan determine which of the 14 required program elements will be provided. Youth can request additional elements or staff may adjust needs at any time during the program based on the changing needs of the youth. Any element not provided with WIOA funding is provided by a partner agency and defined in an MOU.

- Tutoring, Study Skills Training, Instruction, and Dropout Prevention activities that lead to completion of a high school diploma or recognized equivalent- typically provided by referrals to Skills U and career manager counseling. By identifying areas of academic concern and assisting with overcoming learning obstacles by providing tools and resources to develop learning strategies and activities that keep a young person in school and engaged in formal learning and /or training setting.
- Alternative Secondary School and Dropout Recovery Services assist youth who have struggled in traditional secondary education or who have dropped out of school typically provided by referrals to Skills U. Both services help youth re-engage in education that leads to completion of a recognized high school equivalent. Including: Individualized academic instruction, English as a second language, credit recovery, counseling, education plan development, and basic education skills training.
- Paid and Unpaid Work Experience is a structured learning experience in a workplace and provides opportunities for career exploration and skill development, provided by Cumberland's Career center staff in formal agreement with approved workshop providers.
- Occupational Skills Training is an organized program of study that provides specific skills and leads to proficiency in an occupational field – typically provided by state approved providers within the Cumberland's high demand area sectors of training. Occupational skills training is: outcome orientated and focused on specific occupational goals, is of sufficient duration to impart the skills needed to meet the occupational goal, and leads to the attainment of a recognized post-secondary credential.
- Education Offered Concurrently with Workforce Preparation is an integrated education and training model combining workforce preparation, basic academic skills, and occupational skills. Describes how workforce preparation activities, basic academic skills and hands-on occupational skills training are to be taught within the same time frame and connected to training in a specific occupation, occupational cluster, or career pathway. This is typically provided through Cumberland's Career center staff in collaboration with the approved occupational training provider and or Skills U.
- Leadership Development Opportunities encourage responsibility, confidence, employability, self-determination, and other positive social behaviors – Could be offered by any of our partnering organizations, Cumberland's Career center staff, and approved worksite providers which include: Exposure to post-secondary educational possibilities, community and service learning projects, peer-centered activities, peer mentoring, team leadership training, decision making training, life skills training such as parenting and work behavior, civic engagement and other activities that place youth in leadership roles such as serving on youth leadership committees.

- Supportive Services enable an individual to participate in WIOA activities – provided By the Cumberland's Career center staff, local Community Action Agencies, Goodwill Industries, local churches, and various other local entities.
- Adult Mentoring is a formal relationship between a youth and an adult mentor with structured activities where the mentor offers guidance, support, and encouragement to develop the competence and character of the youth participant. This can be set up by the Cumberland's Career center staff, through various churches and community organizations and possible employers.
- Follow-up Services are provided following program exit to help ensure youth succeed in employment or post-secondary education and training. Follow up services may include regular contact with a youth participant's employer, including assistance in addressing work related problems that arise. Provided by the Cumberland's Career center staff.
- Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling provides individualized counseling to participants, including drug/alcohol and mental health counseling. Provided by the local school system counselors, and/or Adanta, depending upon the type of counseling needed.
- Financial Literacy Education provides youth with the skills and knowledge they need to achieve long-term financial stability. Financial literacy education encompasses information and activities on a range of topics, such as creating budgets; setting up checking and saving accounts, managing spending, credit and debt, understanding credit reports and credit scores, and protecting against identity theft. Provided by the Cumberland's Career center staff.
- Entrepreneurial Skills Training provides the basics of starting and operating a small business and develops entrepreneurial skills . This training helps youth develop the skills associated with entrepreneurship, such as the ability to take initiative, creatively seek out and identify business opportunities, develop budgets and determine resource needs, communicate effectively and market oneself or ideas. Examples of approaches to teaching youth entrepreneurial skills could include work experience programs that provide youth with experience in the day-to-day operation of a business. Provided by the Cumberland's Career center staff and approved employers and worksite providers.
- Services that provide Labor Market Information offer employment and labor market information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area and includes career awareness, counseling, and exploration services. LMI also identifies employment opportunities, and provides knowledge of job market expectation, including education and skill requirements and potential earnings. Provided by the Cumberland's Career center staff through case management services to include introduction of several online websites for LMI info, resume creation, job search, and employment opportunities.
- Postsecondary Preparation and Transition Activities help youth prepare for and transition to post-secondary education and training. These services include helping youth explore education options, including technical training schools, community colleges, 4 year colleges and universities, and Registered Apprenticeship programs.

Other examples of post-secondary preparation and transition activities could include: assisting youth to prepare for SAT/ACT testing, assisting with college admission applications, searching and applying for scholarships and grants, filling out Financial Aid applications, and connecting youth to post-secondary education training programs. This will be provided by the Cumberland Career center staff.

Measurable Outcomes:

OUTCOME	METRIC/INDICATOR	DATA SOURCE
To expand the Labor Pool for the future with skilled workers	WIOA performance measures and the number of target population participating	Internal and from Partners

Measuring and Monitoring Success

As part of the action planning process, it is important to measure and monitor success. In order to stay on task and on time, consider possible problems that might stall progress. Potential hang-ups will be unique to each task and could stem from issues such as a lack of resources, lack of follow-through, or lack of buy-in from stakeholders. Focusing on continuous improvement and proactively addressing problems can strengthen the timeline and outcomes.

No matter how proactive the Board and Champions may be throughout implementation, however, there will always be unexpected issues that emerge and may require an adjustment to the implementation plan. This should be expected and the Strategic Plan should be monitored to determine if new actions are appropriate or if timelines and responsible parties need to be shifted.

Appendices

Appendix A: Labor Market Information

Appendix B: Stakeholder Survey Summary

Appendix C: Strategic Planning Session Summaries

Appendix D: Best Practice Example

APPENDIX A

Labor Market Information

Labor Market Information

The Cumberland Workforce Development Area (WDA, Region) includes 13 counties in Southeastern Kentucky². The following data profile summarizes the current population, employment, and more detailed industry information for these counties, with special emphasis on 2016 and changes predicted over the next decade (2016-2026)³.

Total Population Change

With just over 320,000 residents in 2016, the Region's total population is expected to grow one percent in the next decade. This anticipated growth is slower than the state of Kentucky (2%) and national rates (4%) over this same timeframe.

Region	2016 Population	2026 Population	2016-2026 Area # Net Change %	
Cumberlands WDA	321,742	325,426	3,684	1.1%
Kentucky	4,443,539	4,534,300	90,761	2.0%
United States	323,772,974	336,753,386	12,980,412	4.0%

Population Shifts by Age

The Cumberlands WDA is expected to see the most gains in adults nearing or already in retirement (age 60+). Key losses are anticipated for young adults between 15 and 29 years old, as well as more experienced workers between 40 and 59.

Population Shifts, by Age	Age Range	2016 Population	2016-2026 # Change %	
Major Gains	Over 60	77,211	12,450	16.1%
Key Losses	40 to 59	87,245	- 8,012	- 9.2%
	15 to 29	59,720	- 3,482	- 5.8%

Population Age Cohort	2016 Population	2016-2026 # Change %	
Under 5	19,609	114	0.6%
5 to 19	60,775	663	1.1%
20 to 34	57,739	- 2,279	-3.9%
35 to 54	83,320	- 5,124	-6.1%
55 to 64	44,095	- 821	-1.9%
Over 65	56,202	11,135	19.8%
Total	321,742	3,684	1.1%

² Includes Adair, Casey, Clinton, Cumberland, Green, Laurel, McCreary, Pulaski, Rockcastle, Russell, Taylor, Wayne, and Whitley Counties

³ Unless otherwise cited, data is from EMSI 2016.4 dataset

Population Shifts by Race/Ethnicity

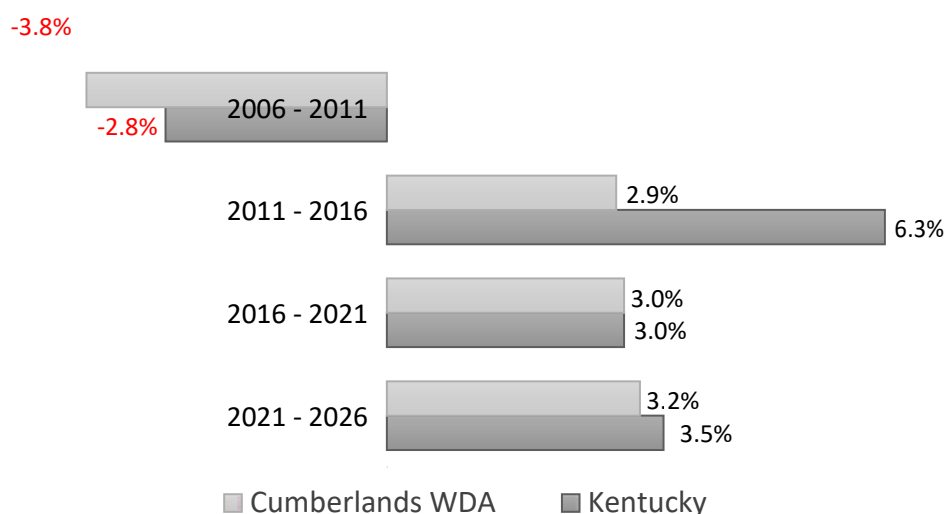
With 94 percent of the 2016 population identifying as White, the Region is not presently diverse. All demographic categories are expected to grow over the next decade, although Whites are expected to add the largest number of individuals (1,076), followed by Hispanic (923) and Black (664) populations. Increasing in smaller quantities, the fastest growing race/ethnicity groups are Asian (23%), Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (20%), and Two or More Races (14%).

Population Shifts, by Race & Ethnicity	2016 Population	2016-2026 # Change	%
White	302,974	1,076	0.4%
Hispanic	6,700	923	14%
Black	5,667	664	12%
Two or More Races	3,852	556	14%
Asian	1,584	359	23%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	866	86	10%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	98	20	20%

Employment

Rebounding from historical job losses (2006 – 2011), the Region has experienced employment growth over the past five years and is expected to continue job gains (7,647 total, or 6.3%) through 2026. In 2016, there were 120,938 jobs in the Cumberland Workforce Development Area, including full-time, part-time, and self-employed workers – a 2.9% increase from 2011 numbers.

Net Job Loss/Gains (2006 - 2026)



Unemployment

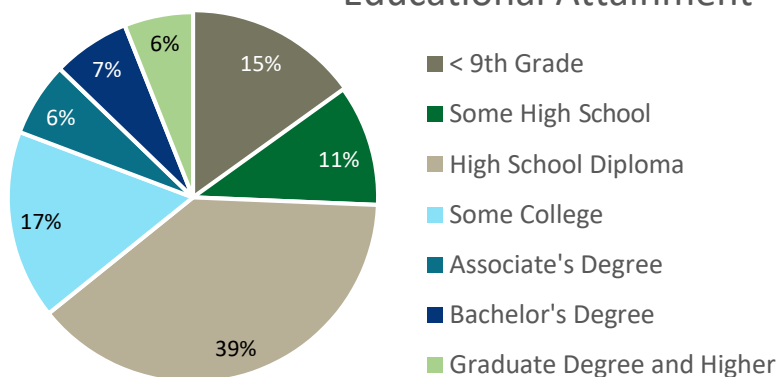
Of the workforce development regions in Kentucky, the Cumberland WDA has the third highest unemployment rate at 5.5 percent (6,846 individuals) as of October 2016. This rate was slightly higher than the state's rate of 4.6 percent in this same month. Within the thirteen-county area, Russell County has the highest unemployment rate (7.9%) and Green County has the lowest (4.0%).

Region	Unemployment ⁴	
	#	%
Kentucky	92,265	4.6%
Cumberlands LWDA	6,846	5.5%
Adair	389	5.6%
Casey	290	4.4%
Clinton	234	6.2%
Cumberland	129	4.5%
Green	201	4.0%
Laurel	1,357	5.7%
McCreary	322	6.7%
Pulaski	1,270	5.0%
Rockcastle	347	5.0%
Russell	469	7.9%
Taylor	530	4.5%
Wayne	526	7.2%
Whitley	782	5.9%

Educational Attainment

Of those aged 25 and older, just under 40 percent of the Region hold a high school diploma or equivalent, while another 26 percent have not yet completed high school. Approximately one-fifth (19%) have earned an Associate's degree or higher.

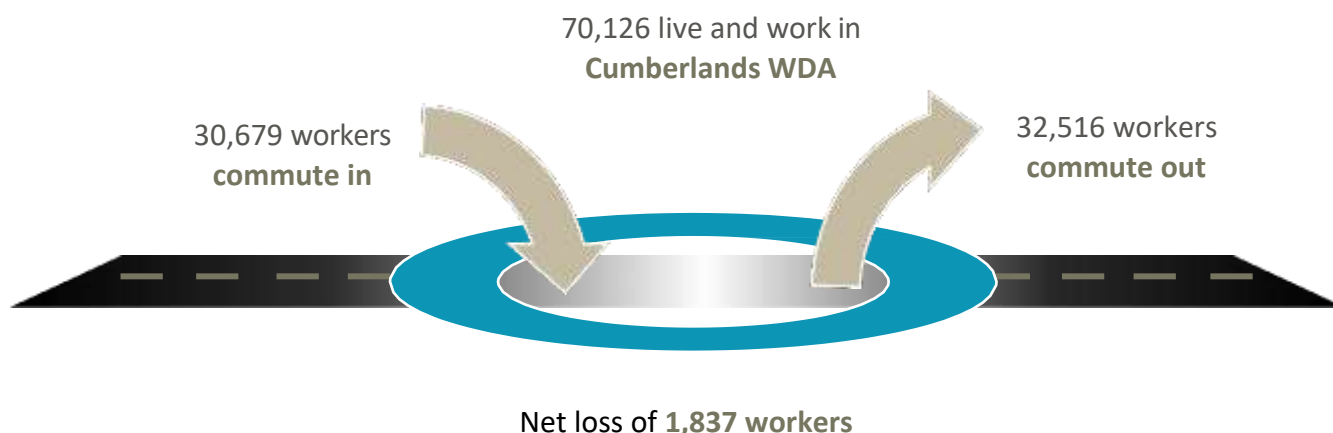
Cumberlands WDA
Educational Attainment



⁴ Preliminary, not seasonally adjusted, October 2016. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics Program

Commuting Patterns

Cumberlands Workforce Development Area had more than 30,000 workers commuting into the region in 2014 and another 32,500 residents commuting out – for a net loss of approximately 1,800 workers. The majority of people both live and work in the region (just over 70,000).⁵



- ▶ Within the Cumberlands WDA, the largest counties for both residents and workers include Pulaski (17% of workers, 16% of residents) and Laurel (15% of workers, 14% of residents).
- ▶ Outside of the Cumberlands WDA: Fayette County employs the greatest number of out-commuters (4% of residents) followed by Jefferson County (3%); Knox County is home to the most in-commuters (4% of workers)

Industry Overview

At the 2-digit NAICS⁶ code, Health Care and Social Assistance; Government; and Manufacturing are the three largest industries in the region and each sector employed roughly 18,000 workers in 2016. Educational Services is anticipated to grow the fastest over the next ten years (1,012, 32% growth), followed by Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services (with 1,779 new jobs, 21% growth). Construction is expected to contract the most (-19%), for a total loss of 921 jobs from 2016 employment.

Location Quotient (LQ) measures how concentrated or specialized an industry is in a particular area and helps to demonstrate what makes a particular economy unique. A number greater than 1.25 indicates that the particular sector is considerably more concentrated than the national average and may signal local demand for the products and/or services produced by that industry have been met and the industry is likely exporting products and/or services outside of the region.

⁴ Census on the Map, 2014 (latest year available)

⁶ North American Industry Classification System; a full list of 2-digit NAICS employment trends are detailed in the following table.

In other words, these may be industries that are bringing money into the area, rather than circulating money already present. The region has a high LQ for the Manufacturing (LQ 1.80) and Transportation and Warehousing (LQ 1.77) sectors.

Industry (2-Digit NAICS)	2016 Employment	% of 2016 Total	2016 – 2026 Change		Location Quotient
			#	%	
Health Care and Social Assistance	18,130	15%	3,147	17%	1.19
Government	18,771	16%	423	2%	1.01
Manufacturing	17,159	14%	69	0%	1.80
Retail Trade	14,504	12%	593	4%	1.15
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	8,362	7%	1,779	21%	1.10
Accommodation and Food Services	8,812	7%	253	3%	0.86
Transportation and Warehousing	7,144	6%	435	6%	1.77
Other Services (except Public Administration)	4,650	4%	533	11%	0.80
Educational Services	3,137	3%	1,012	32%	1.01
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	3,233	3%	674	21%	0.42
Construction	4,793	4%	- 921	- 19%	0.74
Wholesale Trade	3,231	3%	- 121	- 4%	0.70
Finance and Insurance	2,918	2%	- 71	- 2%	0.62
Information	1,596	1%	- 161	- 10%	0.72
Crop and Animal Production	1,259	1%	- 93	- 7%	0.86
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	976	1%	45	5%	0.48
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	935	1%	5	1%	0.47
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	551	0.5%	108	20%	1.13
Management of Companies and Enterprises	312	0.3%	51	16%	0.18
Utilities	454	0.4%	- 102	- 22%	1.05

Top and Growing Industries⁷

Zooming in a bit further to the 4-digit industry (NAICS) code level, Education and Hospitals (Local Government) tops the list for most the jobs in 2026, followed by Restaurants and Other Eating Places. Both General Medical and Surgical Hospitals and Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturing remain in the top five for both top and growing industries. Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools is expected to gain the most jobs (1,028) over the next decade.

Top Industries in 2026	2016 Jobs	2026 Jobs	2016-2026 # Change	%
Education and Hospitals (Local Government)	9,155	9,543	388	4%
Restaurants and Other Eating Places	7,863	8,100	237	3%
General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	5,174	6,106	932	18%
Local Government, Excluding Education & Hospitals	4,290	4,441	151	4%
Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturing	3,569	4,541	972	27%

Growing Industries 2016 – 2026	2016 Jobs	2026 Jobs	2016-2026 # Change	%
Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools	2,776	3,804	1,028	37%
Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturing	3,569	4,541	972	27%
General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	5,174	6,106	932	18%
Business Support Services	3,238	4,098	860	27%
Employment Services	2,155	2,759	604	28%

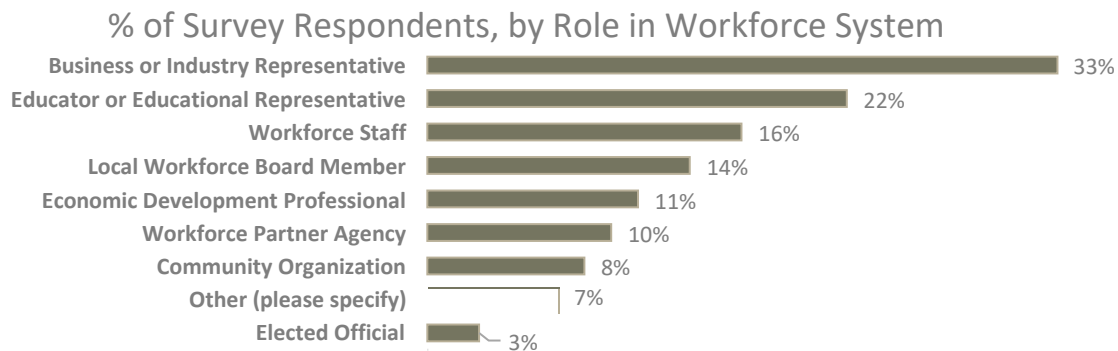
⁷Top refers to the largest # employed (jobs) in 2026. Growing reflects the largest # change.

APPENDIX B

Stakeholder Survey Summary

Stakeholder Survey Summary

To better inform the strategic plan, a regional survey was conducted of key stakeholders in November, 2016. The seventy-three respondents represented a broad spectrum of representatives from workforce, economic development, elected office, education, as well as community and partner agencies.



Respondents were asked to comment on their future vision for the Workforce Development Board (including values and areas to focus on), what the current opportunities and challenges are, and what success would look like in the region if the strategic plan is successful. Key themes from the survey and topics that were frequently discussed revolved around:

- ▶ **Building community partnerships** – especially through training programs and building strong relationships with employers.
- ▶ **Optimized and effective training and education** – improving the overall skills of the workforce through training and education.
- ▶ **Data-informed decision making** – utilizing labor market information and outcomes.
- ▶ **Alignment with economic development in the community** – to reduce unemployment, promote job growth, and build upon sector strategies/initiatives.
- ▶ **Quality service to jobseekers and employers** – ensuring solid oversight from the Board and a well-informed staff knowledge of program offerings.
- ▶ **Investment in the youth** – including out-of-school youth, and developing soft skills training.
- ▶ **Marketing services to the community** – more awareness of all services offered at Career Centers.
- ▶ **Promoting on-the-job training and apprenticeship opportunities**
- ▶ **Clearly defined goals and objectives** resulting from the strategic planning process.
- ▶ **Serving those with greatest needs** – addressing substance abuse issues and serving at-risk, disabled, and formerly incarcerated individuals.

APPENDIX C

Strategic Planning Session
Summaries

Strategic Planning Session Summaries

The first of two strategic planning sessions was held on December 13, 2016, and 26 attendees represented a diverse group of stakeholders including education, economic development, business, elected officials, as well as workforce board and staff.

For context and to better inform the group discussion, key demographic trends and labor market information were presented (detailed in Appendix A). Additionally, results of an online survey of over 70 stakeholders were shared (detailed in Appendix B).

Original mission and vision statements were then brainstormed and drafted:

Draft Mission Statement:

We partner to serve employers and employees to develop a skilled workforce for the prosperity of our communities.

Draft Vision Statement:

The Cumberland Area is a prosperous community with a robust talent pipeline directed toward the needs of business and industry.

Participants then worked in smaller groups to identify the local workforce development system's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT analysis) and prioritize in the strategic plan. Group discussion and voting occurred and the top three in each category included:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Availability of training programs and funding, for students & employers▶ Prepared, well-trained Workforce Staff▶ KY FAME (Kentucky Federation for Advanced Manufacturing Education) & TRACK (Tech Ready Apprentices for Careers in Kentucky) programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ 4-year college myth and Career & Technical Education stereotypes▶ Service awareness – not everyone knows about all services offered▶ Disconnection between businesses and community
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Short-term training in specific, high-demand occupations▶ Internships & Apprenticeships▶ Align education, industry, workforce and community partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Drug & Substance Abuse▶ Social programs (entitlements and government assistance)▶ Less money available or cuts to funding

A complete list of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats identified by the groups include (prioritized by popular vote):

Strengths

- ▶ Availability of training programs and funding for students and employers (11 votes)
- ▶ KY FAME and TRACK programs; educational opportunities and pathways (4 votes, 2 mentions)
- ▶ Prepared, well-trained workforce staff (3 votes)
- ▶ Seasoned leadership team w. strong regional cooperation (2 votes)
- ▶ Engaged partners in education involvement (2 votes)
- ▶ Career Center resources (1 vote)
- ▶ Willingness to work with job fairs
- ▶ Compassionate

Weaknesses

- ▶ Soft skill development (8 votes)
- ▶ Four-year college myth and CTE stereotype (7 votes)
- ▶ Not everyone knows services offered (4 votes)
- ▶ Businesses disconnected with community (look outside of own four walls) (2 votes)
- ▶ Inability to fight free government programs (1 vote)
- ▶ Communication (1 vote)
- ▶ Shrinking career pathways
- ▶ Fulfilling needs of businesses
- ▶ Lack of specific skill training

Opportunities

- ▶ Ability to offer short term training in specific, high-demand occupations (9 votes)
- ▶ LIFT program, apprenticeships, internships (4 votes, 2 mentions)
- ▶ Utilize technology to minimize out of office meetings (2 votes)
- ▶ Align education, industry, WIB, and community (2 votes)
- ▶ Better industry leader network / sector partnerships (2 votes, 2 mentions)
- ▶ Robotics (2 votes)
- ▶ Transportation system
- ▶ Critical thinking
- ▶ Enhanced networking opportunities, e.g. Veterans, Low-level offenders)(1 vote)

Threats

- ▶ Drug use / substance abuse (10 priority votes, 2 group mentions)
- ▶ Social programs / entitlements and government assistance (8 votes)
- ▶ Less funding / cuts to funding (4 votes, 2 group mentions)
- ▶ Low workforce participation (1 vote, 2 group mentions)
- ▶ Soft skills (2 group mentions)
- ▶ Leadership changes

The second strategic planning session was held on January 18th, 2017, and attended by 21 individuals. Participants reviewed the mission and vision statements drafted at the first planning session, which took place on December 13, 2017. There were no additional comments or revisions noted.

To better inform the day's discussion, key labor market information, demographic trends, and highlights of the SWOT analysis and survey themes were also reviewed. More in-depth conversation followed.

After separating into smaller work groups, “big picture” focus areas were brainstormed and each group reported their top three (3) priorities to the large group. Participants then voted on the areas they considered most import⁸. These focus areas included:

- Communication & Partnerships (23 votes)
- Expanding the Labor Pool (19 votes)
- Streamlined Services (14 votes)
- Demand-Focused Job Training (22 votes)
- Technology (4 votes)

The top four areas were finalized by popular vote, with broad agreement that technology is likely to play a significant role in the other focus areas.

Much of the work accomplished at this session included identifying key focus areas and detailing specific goals within each focus area – one goal was drafted per focus area and then commented on by the group.

⁸ Each participant was allotted four prioritization votes

The stakeholder group defined goal statements for the top four focus areas, including:

Focus Areas and Goals

Focus Area: **Demand-Focused Job Training**

GOAL: Increase the number of certificates and career-focused credentials for local/ regional in-demand careers in the working population by 20% by December 2020.

Focus Area: **Expand the Labor Pool**

GOAL: Increase the labor force participation rate of the Cumberland Region (approximately 60% in 2016⁹) by 2% annually through 2020.

Focus Area: **Streamlined Services**

GOAL: Develop all Career Managers at local Career Centers to be the single point of contact for workforce services and provide support for businesses by assuming red-tape regulatory paperwork by the end of FY 2018.

Focus Area: **Communication and Partnerships***

GOAL: Increase communication and partnership awareness in the Cumberland Area through social media outreach by creating accounts (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) by June 30, 2017.

** Note the Communication and Partnerships goal was later integrated into other focus area goals. Committees decided communication and partnerships were critical aspects to accomplishing other goals and worked to incorporate them throughout the strategies and action plans.*

⁹ Calculated from session/group research; statistic was validated and updated to 58% for the final draft.

Best Practice Examples

Engaging Business, Industry, and Partners



Partners for a Competitive Workforce (PCW) is a collaboration of employer, education, community-based, and workforce partners organized by the United Way of Greater Cincinnati whose mission is to better serve business needs by growing a qualified

and skilled workforce. With a strong employer focus, career pathways were developed in health care, advanced manufacturing, construction, IT, and supply chain management.

Recognizing the gaps in skills for manufacturing, eight employers agreed to sponsor 12 apprentices in a Competency-Based Manufacturing Apprenticeship Program, with customized on-the-job training and related technical instruction in two separate occupations – Machine Operator 1 and Welder Fitter. Students meet competency standards developed and recognized by industry and may be able to complete a program of study much faster than time-based apprenticeships and at their own pace. Businesses are involved in identifying the needs and specific curriculum that meet their needs and the collective allows for sharing resources among employers.

More information is available at <http://www.competitiveworkforce.com/>



The Lane Workforce Partnership in Oregon launched the Lane County Sector Strategy Team (LCSST) in late 2014 to bring together

regional workforce development, economic development, city and business leaders and support critical industries in the County. The area is home to over 400 technology companies and critical labor market demand made the technology sector a natural fit for LCSST's first pilot sector strategy. Since its original meeting, the Lane County Tech Collaborative's successes have helped secure \$107,000 in grant funds to support additional sector partnerships, including the Food and Beverage and Construction-Aggregate Sectors.

More information is available at <http://www.laneworkforce.org/sector-strategies/lane-county-sector-strategy-overview/>

Improved, Diverse Training Options for a Prepared Talent Pipeline



The Northwest Kentucky Training Consortium (NKTC) is a membership-based partnership between employers, education, and training and employment service providers. Created in August 2010, the Consortium's

mission is, "to create or coordinate cost-effective training, educational, and developmental opportunities that meet employer needs while attracting and supporting members."

Covering Henderson, Union, Webster and McLean counties in Western, KY, the non-profit is governed by an elected board of members from industry, education, economic development, and small business. Membership fees are based on the number of employees at the time of application.

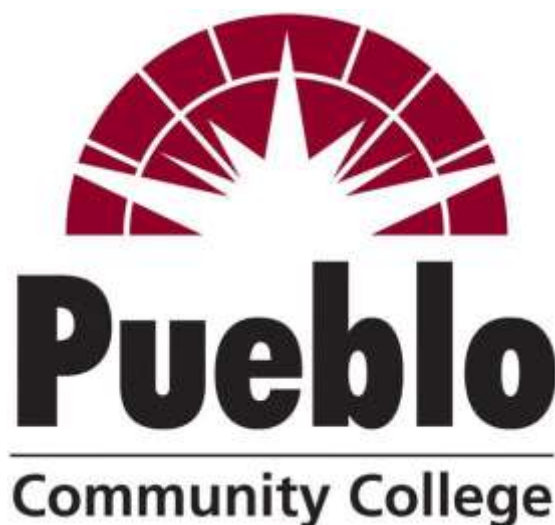
Although training options may vary from year to year based on member needs, the 2017 schedule focuses primarily on communication and soft skills development, human relations, management and leadership, as well as technology essentials. A full list of low-cost courses can be found at <http://www.nktc.org/upcoming-trainings.html>.

More information can be found at <http://www.nktc.org/home.html>

Pueblo Community College offers diverse training opportunities onsite at regional campuses, on location at businesses or companies, or using one of their Mobile Learning Labs, which allow the college to bring training anywhere.

Sponsored through the U.S. Department of Labor, the customized Mobile Learning Labs provide a wide range of skill development (from fundamentals to advanced trouble-shooting) in hands-on trades including manufacturing, oil and gas, welding, safety, electrical, and more. The Mobile Learning Labs are equipped for a number of programs including:

- ▶ Electrical Systems: AC/DC Trainers, Programmable Logic Controller Trainers, Instrumentation Trainers, and Motors and Control Trainers



- ▶ Mechanical Systems: Hydraulic Trainers, Pneumatic Trainers, Belt and Chain Drive Alignment Trainers, and Shaft Coupling Alignment Trainers
- ▶ Welding: Six welding stations with set up capabilities including GMAW, FCAW, TIG, MIG, Oxy-Acetylene, and Grinding.
- ▶ HAAS Toolroom CNC Mill: HAAS Toolroom CNC Lathe, Drill Press and Anchor Press, Bench Grinder, and CAD/CAM Workstations

A full list of Pueblo Corporate College training courses can be found at

<https://www.pueblocc.edu/WorkForce/Training-Courses/>.

More information can be found at <https://www.pueblocc.edu/Business-Workforce/>

Awareness, Outreach, and Communications

Many of the strategies for improving brand awareness in a business can also be applied to workforce development organizations. Generally, when conducting an outreach campaign to boost awareness, NinjaOutreach provides eight useful tips, including:

- | | |
|--|--|
| ▶ Conduct research and define what to say | ▶ Provide value upfront |
| ▶ Reach out to businesses | ▶ Pay attention to feedback |
| ▶ Find common ground, be personal and relevant | ▶ Transform customers into brand ambassadors |
| ▶ Connect with warm leads, cold outreach is less effective | ▶ Be tenacious and follow up with outreach prospects |

When building a brand awareness strategy with a great return on investment, the firm Ambassador advises organizations to:

- ▶ Segment branding efforts to target highly specific audiences -- focusing attention on target markets.
- ▶ Use retargeting to establish strong brand recall – identify and market to individuals who already have brand awareness, who have previously visited the website, who have opened an email, and/or who have searched for the product/service by name.
- ▶ Make social [media] customer engagement a priority – being proactive about engagement levels, and engaging conversation with past, present, and future customers.

More information can be found at <https://ninjaoutreach.com/brand-awareness-best-practices-from-influencers/> and <https://www.getambassador.com/blog/3-steps-building-brand-awareness-strategy-great-roi>



Arapahoe/Douglas Works! collects data and compiles reports to help local business and industry better-understand the current environment.

Arapahoe/Douglas Works! earned the 2014 Metropolitan Cooperation Award

from the Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation for its help in attracting, retaining and expanding regional businesses. The workforce agency contributes to annual industry and labor force analysis (conducted by Metro Denver EDC), provides input/output analysis to economic development partners (helping them in reporting their successes), and provides effective outreach and recruitment services.

More information can be found at <http://www.adworks.org/>