



2201 Jack Warner Pkwy  
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## 2019 REGION 3 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

### **Vision Statement**

The purpose of the regional workforce development system is to facilitate the establishment and implementation of a comprehensive, coordinated, seamless workforce development system for the region that supports economic and workforce training activities. The Workforce Development Council shall be business led and industry driven.

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of West Alabama Works is to promote the economic prosperity of our region through well-managed, coordinated, integrated, and quality support services for employers and job seekers at all levels.

### **Top Occupations (not in order)**

- Healthcare/Nursing
- Hospitality
- Customer Service
- Transportation/Drivers
- Logistics
- Information Technology
- Machinists
- Industrial Maintenance
- Production/Assemblers
- Welders/Fitters

### **Top 5 Target Industries**

- Automotive
- Healthcare
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Business and Professional Services

View our strategic plan online via [westalabamaworks.com](http://westalabamaworks.com)



## West Alabama Works Process

Our unwavering commitment to an industry-driven, industry-led model means we begin with industry clusters (automotive, construction, healthcare, manufacturing, and professional services) that drive all other activities. The outcome of this process is a qualified, trainable workforce ready to meet the demands of industry across our region.



**QUALIFIED, TRAINABLE WORKFORCE**

## **GOAL 1: Workforce Development- Enhance the knowledge, skills, and availability of workforce in Region 3.**

### Objectives:

- Increase completion in the Ready To Work program
- Increase employers' awareness, involvement and usage of workforce tools in the regions
- Create a comprehensive, cooperative, and efficient service provider model
- Increase employers' and providers' knowledge of available funding streams
- Work with partners to tackle key barriers to workforce development, such as prisoner reentry and substance abuse issues
- Develop an enhanced role for regional career centers in proactively developing qualified workforce candidates
- Create a sustainable workforce matrix to ensure ongoing development of potential employees
- Increase connectivity of workforce services and information with all nine counties in the region
- Continue to enhance the partnership with non-profit partners in the region
- Effectively utilize Career Connect to connect job seekers with training and employment opportunities
- Increase Success Plus initiative by supporting technical education, short-term certificates, apprenticeships and technical degrees

### Critical Success Factors:

- Must have access to and participate in training
- Must have industry and employer partnership
- Training must be available and accessible to participants
- Participants and employers must see benefit in training

### Barriers:

- Lack of funding to offer training
- Lack of transportation to training for participants
- Population
- Affordable housing

### Strategies:

- Continue to expand the active cluster process to communicate workforce solutions and gather employer workforce needs
- Enhance the communication efforts with workforce that promotes the needs of regional clusters



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- Actively work to communicate and deliver workforce services to all communities in the nine county region
- Utilize social media and technology to tell the story of workforce development to stakeholders, employers, and job seekers
- Meet with elected officials, non-profits and community stakeholders in rural counties when holding outreach events
- Sustain and expand the newly- created prisoner reentry program at Bibb County Correctional Facility
- Develop a sustainable substance prevention program in partnership with PRIDE in the K-12 system
- Continue to expand the Prisoner Reentry Task Force to include community corrections
- Continue to implement community outreach events to increase the number of individuals in Career Connect
- Create transportation task force to focus on transportation issues and find solutions



## **GOAL 2: Administration, Financial Resources and Leadership- Provide leadership and management of Region 3 operations through a comprehensive workforce model.**

### Objectives

- Develop robust communication between employers and service providers
- Effectively administer the fiscal responsibilities of the 1.5 million dollar POWER grant and the \$1.4 million POWER 2 grant
- Obtain funding to assist specific training and job readiness programs


### Critical Success Factors

- Staff and facilities
- Operational policies must be in place
- Funding for target training and administration
- Commitment and participation from rural counties and employers
- Legal support
- Engagement of key business and community leaders

### Barriers:

- Lack of state and federal funding
- Lack of grant availability
- Fund to support continued growth
- Rural community and employers' commitment
- Providers' commitment to the new model

### Strategies


- Enhance current cluster engagement and involvement
  - Continue to foster business engagement through management contract
  - Develop a plan to maintain and expand funding to WDC to provide necessary workforce development programs in Region 3
  - Develop a long-term funding model
  - Register non-profit corporation
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### **GOAL 3: Training and Education- Create a model between business and education to synchronize workforce needs and training delivery**

#### Objectives

- Increase the number of students participating in dual enrollment by 30%, aligned with Success Plus
- Complete the revision of the Articulation Agreements that Beville and Shelton State have with K-12 and other colleges
- Maximize educational relevance through real-life learning opportunities in grades K-12 by increasing business/industry partnerships by 50%
- Increase the use of apprenticeship programs across multiple business skills, also aligning with Success Plus
- Continue to expand the RTW High School Program
- Increase the number of adult RTW graduates in partnership with Beville State, Shelton State, Lawson State, and Jeff State Community Colleges
- Work with regional Career Centers to increase the number of OJT and ITA participants in the region
- Continue to develop and implement the Educator Workforce Academy to enhance educators' understanding of workforce development
- Partner with The Chamber to increase regional industry tours to counselors, CTE Directors, and Career Coaches
- Partner with area schools to promote career technical education
- Increase employer engagement in career technical education
- Promote dual enrollment, short term credentials and apprenticeship programs for high school students.
- Increase CTE enrollment by 30%
- Partner area schools with business leaders to maximize CTE through financial support, volunteer support and curriculum support
- Advocate for and support qualified CTE instructors, especially paying CTE instructors based on industry experience, rather than teaching experience
- Increase dual enrollment for high school students throughout region
- Assist schools with setting up dual enrollment options with area community colleges

#### Critical Success Factors

- Revise Articulation Agreements
  - Offer real-life learning opportunities
  - Recruit business and industry to participate
  - Hold educational meetings with parents, students, B&I, etc.
  - Establish cooperation between K-12 and postsecondary systems
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## Barriers

- Lack of student, educational institutions, and B&I participation
- Inability to form strong, lasting partnerships in rural counties
- Lack of instructors in dual enrollment
- Lack of competitive pay for qualified CTE instructors
- Potential workforce's knowledge of training/education opportunities
- Turnover in education system
- Lack of funding for education

## Strategies

- Develop a comprehensive plan for dual enrollment, aligning with Success Plus
- Develop strategies to help students earn credentials, aligning with Success Plus
- Hold information sessions about dual enrollment to educators, parents, and students
- Hold meeting with K-12 and other colleges to review and update existing agreements
- Generate interest among businesses by sharing their role in improving workforce development
- Create learning opportunities among businesses, educators, and career coaches to offer career education
- Develop marketing materials for Apprenticeships and Ready to Work using Success Plus verbiage
- Hold Educator Workforce Academy starting in October each year. (91 registered for 2019-2020 session)
- Hold the annual WOW event for regional students in the 8th grade
- Continue to grow the WOW Varsity event for 9th – 12th graders
- Continue to grow the WOW 2.0 event of 11th, 12th, and post-secondary students
- Develop Pathway to Success marketing plan (Career Pathways video – on websites and YouTube and shared via social media)
- Meet with Department of Education stakeholders to advocate for career technical education instructors rate of pay to reflect industry experience.

## **GOAL 4: Marketing and Communication- Promote awareness of Region 3 Workforce opportunities to both industry and current and future workforce across the nine county region.**

### Objectives

- Increase business and industry participation in West Alabama Works' process
- Increase business and industry partnerships with area schools
- Raise awareness of high-paying, in-demand jobs in Region 3
- Promote AlabamaWorks! brand
- Bring awareness to West Alabama Works' mission and opportunities
- Develop a strategic pipeline to help employers fill needs and give area citizens a path to success through high wage, in-demand careers
- Promote and provide resources for career technical education
- Promote and provide resources for dual enrollment, scholarships and apprenticeships

### Critical Success Factors

- Business and industry participation
- Multiple communication streams
- Educators' participation

### Barriers

- Negative stigma of two-year programs and technical education
- Distance in large region
- Dense information with some programs, i.e. WIOA

### Strategies

- Develop media relations calendar to promote events and other programs, allowing West Alabama Works to be featured in traditional media at least once a month
- Leverage rural regional leaders to create dialogue in their communities
- Visit outlying areas to tour business and industry
- Engage in local school boards, city council, county commission and other related meetings to speak to community leaders and members
- Engage educators in the region to communicate opportunities
- Utilize career coaches and CTE directors to steer students to high demand careers
- Continue to enhance WOW website as a hub for parents, students and educators to discover high-demand careers, career technical education, apprenticeships and dual-enrollment





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- Continue to use Career Connect to directly communicate and connect job seekers with employment and training opportunities
- Develop social media strategy via Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to highlight programs, partnerships and events
- Produce videos to highlight events, partnerships and programs
- Distribute monthly eNews to keep stakeholders in the loop on WAW's programs and events
- Use paid advertising strategies when available for events and programs (i.e. WOW)





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## **GOAL 5: Outreach and Service Delivery- Develop and apply action and service delivery that meet both urban and rural needs in the region.**

### Objectives

- Have 3 forums for service providers, the public, and lead private sector agencies
- Hold at least 4 rural outreach events each year
- Continue the WAW position for rural outreach
- Maximize opportunities for exchange of ideas for improved service delivery and consistent communication among all service providers
- Enhance the partnership between the Career Center, Regional Workforce Board, and West Alabama Works Regional Council

### Critical Success Factors

- Must develop and implement an inventory, referral system, and linkages for individuals that are not “job ready” and have the potential of being left behind

### Barriers

- Lack of interest from participants
- Lack of interest from business and industry
- Lack of service providers
- Duplication of services

### Strategies

- Create activities that will engage service provider groups and network providers into the activities of the Region 3 Council
- Invite service providers and network providers to regional council meeting and include them on the agenda
- Use Rural Outreach team member to effectively hold community meetings and to host rural outreach events with partners and the Career Connect team.
- Work to maintain the overlaid approach to the Regional Council and Regional Workforce Board to enhance communication and cooperation among workforce partners



## Local Resource Overview

Through the partnership, the Regional Council will be able to leverage the Chamber's existing network of committees, such as the Education Policy Council, Minority Business Council, Non-profit Council, and Public Affairs Council. Each of these councils would play a key role in determining needs and resources within their respective areas. This organizational structure would allow the voting members of the Region 3 Workforce Council to focus on key issues surrounding workforce development and work with the Workforce Development staff to formulate key deliverables to meet the needs of the region. A steering committee would also be formed to communicate industry needs and the monthly business of the 501(c)3.

## Network of Internal and External Committees



The Chamber would capitalize on its research capabilities and partnerships to determine the region's workforce clusters and then formulate needs assessments through its already existing relationships in those industry clusters. Through these clusters, the Workforce Development Director coordinates the appropriate agencies and providers to develop programs and services to meet the needs of employers in the region.



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## STRUCTURE

### West Alabama Works

As part of the partnership the Chamber of Commerce will work with the Region 3 Workforce Development Council to create a 501(c)3 organization called West Alabama Works. This organization will be a catalyst in securing additional funding through grants, investors and other workforce funding agencies and programs. West Alabama Works will, in turn, contract with the Chamber of Commerce to manage daily operations and personnel needed to grow the regional workforce offerings. At the same time, the already existing Regional Workforce Council will manage grant opportunities presented through the State of Alabama's workforce initiatives. Through this partnership with the Chamber, the Regional Council and West Alabama Works will be able to maximize potential to raise funds for systemic change.

The partners will work together to establish a central connecting point ('One Stop' system) for workforce needs in the region. A key focus will be to minimize duplication of services and maximize the potential of each provider by communicating key workforce needs in the entire nine county region through both urban and rural outreach programs. Reporting of results to key stakeholders through a workforce matrix system will be implemented within the first 24 months. This allows all parties involved to evaluate the effectiveness and communication of each area of workforce efforts.

