



**WEST
ALABAMA
WORKS!**

2018 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 (Jobs)
- Transportation/Drivers
- Logistics
- Information Technology
- Machinists
- Industrial Maintenance
- Production/Assemblers
- Welders/Fitters

Top 5 Target Industries

- Automotive
- Healthcare
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Service Industry

View our strategic plan online via 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.



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

Objectives

- Increase completion in our RTW 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

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

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
- 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

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
- 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 not committed
- Providers not committed 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

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 SuccessPlus
- Complete the revision of the Articulation Agreements that Bevill 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
- Continue to expand the RTW High School Program
- Increase the number of adult RTW graduates in partnership with Bevill 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

Critical Success Factors

- Revise Articulation Agreements
- Offer real-life learning opportunities
- Business and industry must be willing to participate
- Hold educational meetings with parents, students, B&I, etc.
- Cooperation between K-12 and postsecondary systems

Barriers

- Lack of student, educational institutions, and B&I participation
- Inability to form strong, lasting partnerships in rural counties
- Educate potential workforce on opportunities for learning options

Strategies

- Develop a comprehensive plan for dual enrollment, aligning with SuccessPlus
- Develop strategies to help students earn credentials, aligning with SuccessPlus
- 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. (100 registered for 2018/2019 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

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 training programs by 30%
- Continue to promote the AlabamaWorks! Brand
- Develop a more robust web and social media presence
- Maximize branding opportunities by using partner websites and social media

Critical Success Factors

- Business and industry must come to the table
- Develop multiple communication streams

Barriers

- Non-participation from business and industry
- Issues with distance and diverse needs of a large region

Strategies

- Continue to promote and execute marketing strategy for community outreach events
- 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 the WOW website with updated information for parents, students, and employers
- Use social media to directly connect with K-12, parents and job seekers regarding activities such as WOW, WOW 2.0, CTE programs, and job openings in the region
- Continue to use Career Connect to directly communicate and connect job seekers with employment and training opportunities
- Create story pitches for regional media outlets to highlight successes

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.

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.