

South Dakota Unified State Workforce Plan

PUBLIC COMMENT AND RESPONSES

Comment 1

Suggestions to include verbiage to encompass adults throughout the State Plan strategies.

Department Response: While the South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR) and the One-Stop System will continue to engage and serve adults, the South Dakota Workforce Development Council (WDC) provided priorities for consideration during the development of the Unified State Workforce Plan. These priorities focus on engaging with the youth population, through the age of 24. For this reason, DLR will keep the priorities as they are. Adult services and strategies are identified in the respective program-specific requirements sections.

Comment 2

Suggestions to add language to include Title II Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) providers in the strategy to offer joint presentations to educators with labor market resources and toolkit.

Department Response: The verbiage was added to include AEL providers: *The South Dakota Department of Education (DOE), the DLR, and AEL providers will offer joint presentations to educators with labor market resources and toolkits (bottom of Page 25).*

Comment 3

Concerns the AEL program was not identified as a specific strategy toward achievement of the outlined goals.

Department Response: DLR puts a high value on the AEL program as a key partner in workforce development. As a result, the following has been added to the State Plan (*Page 25, second paragraph under c) State Strategy*):

*While many students preparing for their high school equivalency with AEL programs are also enrolled in WIOA Title I programs, enrollment could improve. DLR will coordinate efforts to pilot a project to offer a **part-time Work Experience for those attending AEL between the ages of 16 and 24** for secondary preparation through the WIOA Title I program concurrently with their studies. If successful, a similar model with English Language Learners may also be established. In addition to providing career exploration and hands on work experience for these individuals, WIOA Title I may offer financial supports such as daycare or transportation to improve educational outcomes. DLR will strive to increase co-enrollment in WIOA Title I and Title II for those ages 16 through 24 from 14% of Title II participants per program year to 20% by 2024. In Program Year 2020, DLR is committed to serving at least 20 of these co-enrolled participants with a Work Experience or Job Shadow to compliment the high school equivalency classroom schedule. As the co-enrollment numbers increase, DLR will annually reevaluate this goal for each program year.*

Comment 4

Suggestion to incorporate a measurable goal for participants ages 20 to 24 with the attainment of high school equivalency. To do so, strong financial support for WIOA Title II programs is recommended.

Department Response: The identification of a measurable goal will be considered as the project to increase attainment of post-secondary credentials is further defined. Goals related to high school completion for individuals under the age of 21 must consider the goals of DOE through the Every Student Succeeds Act. DLR recognizes funding limitations to many workforce programs, including the AEL program.

Comment 5

Concern about the emphasis placed on Integrated Education and Training (IET) in the AEL program section. IET requires additional funding, training, and partnerships. The definition is also in conflict with information provided during professional development opportunities in recent trainings.

Department Response: This section was clarified based on feedback from the WDC during an alignment activity at the December meeting. Due to limited funds, IET is not identified as an area of emphasis. The definition was also clarified. (Page 79, Paragraph 1).

Comment 6

Concern surrounding the date and nature of a study from 2013 cited in the State Plan and the commitment and partnership towards a 65% post-secondary credential attainment, including the process to gather and track this data as the goal is met.

Department Response: The project to increase the post-secondary credential attainment rate is in the beginning phases, including developing a system to track data. This project will take more than four years to accomplish. For this reason, this strategy has been removed from the State Plan. These efforts will continue and, based on progress, may be included in a future revision of the State Plan.

Comment 7

Suggestion to emphasize soft skills training for middle school students, high school students, and adults under Goal 1.

Department Response: Soft skills training, *Bring Your 'A' Game*, for program participants is incorporated under the Analysis of Workforce Development Activities section (Page 22). WIOA funding is utilized to assist eligible program participants in attending soft skills training programs. WIOA funding is not utilized for individuals who are not participants or who are not engaged in the school system.