IVRS area offices are also becoming involved and engaged in sector partnerships. At the state level, IVRS has representation on the statewide Career Pathways and Sector Partnership Advisory Boards and will be involved in policy development that addresses accessibility issues. At the local level, the sector partnerships are locally developed workforce partners that serve specific industry sectors by providing a talent pool of eligible job candidates, as well as technical assistance to business and industry regarding their specific questions and needs. The Burlington Area Office has one IVRS employee on each sector partnership which has proven to be a systemic approach to placement. This allows the team to serve the business, and when a member of the team resigns or retires, a new member from the organization is then placed on the partnership. In this manner business receives services in a continuous fashion, the relationship is built with the partnership, and there is not any gap in service delivery to the business. IVRS area offices are all working with their local workforce development partnerships to become engaged and involved, or in some instances to create these partnerships where they do not exist. IVRS can be instrumental in this development because IVRS is in every county and has personal contacts in each county. This will serve as a conduit to creating and extending sector partnerships to more rural and remote areas of the state.

Sector partnerships are increasingly recognized as an effective method for aligning education, economic, and workforce development systems to address industry-identified labor market needs. The federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), which replaces the Workforce Investment Act, shifts from an “employment first” strategy to one which emphasizes credential attainment through the use of sector partnerships and career pathways. (Page 107)

Title I

IVRS developed a transition strategic plan to expand services for students with disabilities. Progress is occurring; as in 2016, VR served 33% of the students with a disability, and in 2017, that percentage increased to 51%. IVRS and SRC members work together to provide collective responses to incorporate policies and procedures from input received from external partners. SRC members also routinely review survey information from IVRS consumers related to their satisfaction levels with agency services. The SRC did work with Dr. Darlene Groomes, through a consultation project on quality improvement. This led to discussion on the strategic plan to focus on the following areas: Visionary Leadership; Customer Focus; Valuing Employees and partners; Managing for innovation; Management by Facts; and Focus on Results and creating value. Consistent trends that were identified include developing working relationships with business and industry, communication regarding transition initiatives, and implementing the use of technology to increase field staff efficiencies. Other activities in which the SRC helps IVRS advance its goals and mission involve Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS). The SRC has supported IVRS initiatives such as Future Ready Iowa, Intermediary Network contracts, Making the Grade, Transition Alliance Programs, Project Search programs, STEM Career Development...
Iowa (IA) WIOA Matrix

Camps, TEAM (Transitioning to Employment and Advocating for Myself), iJAG (Iowa Jobs for America’s Graduates) have been supported. IVRS staff also informed SRC members of work being done with the Microsoft training academy to help job candidates seeking credentialing in Microsoft products. SRC members are provided quarterly updates about Iowa’s progress in the Employment First initiative. Iowa is the lead agency with the Department of Labor Office of Disability and Employment Policy Employment First project. As part of Iowa’s 2017 Employment First plan, there was a focus in Ottumwa, Iowa, in partnership with the South Central Behavioral Health Region. Priority areas involved provider transformation and staff capacity for four targeted providers and building networking skills for the region in the area of business engagement. A similar initiative is currently underway in two other parts of the state (Des Moines and Cedar Rapids) with a focus on improving staff capacity. SRC members were informed about IVRS’ new grant initiative with Nebraska, with a focus on the Sioux City/Council Bluffs corridor. Iowa VR supported a grant that garnered RSA funding. Staff will be hired to look at closed cases of job candidates in these areas: health care, engineering, transportation and logistics, and advanced manufacturing. The plan is for VR to upgrade these candidate’s skill levels and create a pathway to fill with new job candidates providing advanced credentialing to further career advancement. SRC members also supported communication with the Omaha Indian Tribe of Nebraska and the development of a MOA to foster collaboration with our common job candidates. Recent guest speakers at the SRC ranged from representatives from the IVRS Self-Employment and Independent Living programs, to the Iowa Coalition for Integration and Employment (ICIE). (Page 293) Title I

None noted. Specific recommendations were made during the last SRC meeting on the following: VR SERVICE DELIVERY COMMITTEE Proposed Recommendations to IVRS The VR Service Delivery Committee reviewed data compiled by IVRS on rehabilitation rates of the following disability types: Intellectual Disability, Psychiatric Disability, Autism Spectrum Disorder and Deaf/Hard of Hearing. Data from 2013-2017 was compared and rehab rates were lowest for all of those populations in 2017. Intellectual Disabilities Potential Cause: Employment First • IVRS is serving more people. • Individuals who elect to work in sheltered workshops are closed in Status 28. • More individuals have had failed attempts at competitive integrated employment. • These numbers include people referred from sheltered workshops who don’t really want to work in the community. Potential Recommendations: • Decrease caseload size by increasing waiting list to allow more intensive services to MSD job candidates. • Provide more intensive Career Counseling to individuals employed at subminimum wage. Psychiatric Disabilities Potential Causes: (Page 294) Title I

IVRS has a training coordinator position who stays current on research trends through frequent communication with our university training programs. Management staff are aware and utilize the national Clearinghouse of Rehabilitation Training Materials and we have shared practices through internal work groups as applicable. (Motivational interviewing being an example of a topic) IVRS administrator and senior management staff will often participate in national conferences such as the spring and fall CSAVR Conferences where promising practices and research based ideas are shared. IVRS also participates in regional training and sharing with our common states of Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska which also includes general and blind agencies. These opportunities also facilitate the acquisition and sharing of researched based
Iowa (IA) WIOA Matrix

practices. We also have outreached for TA to WINTAC in areas such as Career Index, Performance measures, quality review of SES programs and services and workforce collaboration which also has been a strategy to stay abreast of current knowledge trends.

The agency routinely uses the latest research and pilot projects to update training programs in areas such as assistive technology, mental illness, learning disabilities, autism, and head injury/traumatic brain injury. IVRS is the lead agency with the Employment First Initiative and both internal staff and IVRS partners have access to a myriad of customized employment training webinars.

IVRS also provides training on policy, motivational interviewing, benefits planning, and when new initiatives and issues arise, training is developed, coordinated and/or provided by the IVRS Training Specialist. Recent examples this past year have included external training coordination with the Epilepsy Foundation and the Iowa Brain Injury Alliance. (Page 323) Title I

IVRS is seeing an increase in service to individuals with the most significant disabilities, which is consistent with our mission. The Managed Care system implemented in Iowa is considered a challenge to individuals who may not have the support of their case manager or care coordinator in a plan to pursue competitive integrated employment. To address these issues, progress has occurred through Employment First efforts to improve coordination of services with managed care organizations and the development of an Employment First Guidebook, which has been shared across systems. Both of Iowa’s major managed care organizations have active members with regular representation on the Employment First Leadership team. IVRS increased reimbursement rates to community providers to align with Iowa Medicaid rates. Training is held at least annually for internal staff and community partners on the roles, responsibilities and expectations for service delivery. IVRS provides an annual Report Out of their service provision to CRPs, which is shared with local IVRS supervisors and available to stakeholders to enhance informed choice options. (Page 331) Title IV

IVRS has been an active participant in the Employment First initiative and as a result, more individuals who may have entered facility-based employment have obtained employment. This is evidenced by the data indicating that in 2014 IVRS served 403 individuals in SES and job Development spending $971,295 dollars and had 252 successful employment outcomes. In 2017, we served 1,057 job candidates spending $1,779,919 and had 406 successful employment outcomes.

Throughout the state, many of Iowa’s Community Rehabilitation Programs have shown a commitment to competitive integrated employment (CIE) and helping facilitate an individual’s movement towards this goal. CIE is a priority for most of SRC members and has been the driving force behind Iowa’s Employment First efforts as well. As a result, there were changes made to the IVRS Menu of Employment Services in partnership with the Iowa Department of Human Services and supported by external service providers. The work in Iowa is done collaboratively and both a representative from DHS and the Executive Director of the Iowa Association of Community Providers remain key members of the Iowa Employment First Leadership Team.
Iowa (IA) WIOA Matrix

IVRS will continue to participate in Employment First efforts - with its clear focus on helping individuals with the most significant disabilities access competitive integrated employment. The Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council, Disability Rights of Iowa, the Iowa Association of Community Providers, Iowa’s Department of Human Rights, Iowa Client Assistance Program and the IVRS State Rehabilitation Council are key partners focused on equitable access and participation. National data from the Department of Labor in 2016 indicated there were 241,265 individuals in America earning subminimum wages. Iowa data shows a figure of 5,568 earning subminimum wages during that period. (Page 338) Title IV

STRATEGY — IVRS staff will work with local education agencies to help them understand the career skill gap, programs available to students to become employed in Fast track career jobs, and career pathways that will lead to employment. IVRS will support STEM training to help students and youth achieve access in higher employment. IVRS will also provide counseling and guidance services on labor market information and the opportunities available with appropriate training. Information will be provided by IVRS to youth about internships, apprenticeship training and post-secondary options.

IVRS continues to promote the Employment first philosophy that work is the first and preferred option for all individuals, including youth. High expectations to build towards successful careers are discussed in initial conversations by IVRS, and staff are able to access students as early as age 14. (Page 343) Title IV

Priority areas for IVRS are based upon input from the SRC, our comprehensive statewide needs assessment and strategic plan. Priority areas include increasing employment outcomes and the labor market participation rate for individuals with disabilities; improve transition services consistent with the goals of the pre-employment transition vision; expand business networking and continue to expand Employment First efforts for all individuals with the belief that everyone can work with the right services and the right supports. (Page 346) Title IV

The State Unit recognizes that Title VI, Part B funds are only a supplement to the regular Title I funds. By the end of the first quarter of the fiscal year the State Unit typically has exhausted its Title VI, Part B dollars and is spending Title I dollars for supported employment. IVRS is making an effort to collaborate with various government entities including the Department of Human Services Medicaid Waiver program to ensure that adequate funding will be available to pay for supported employment. Efforts to align funding, as well as establish uniform payment systems among state partners continues to be viewed as IVRS priority areas going forward.

The MOA with our Medicaid Provides clearly identifies a priority by IVRS to serve youth with disabilities. The leveraged funding between our state systems has provided flexibility in determining funding streams with IVRS taking a lead role for those under the age of 24. Continued emphasis needs to occur in this area, as Iowa’s managed care system has experienced significant change, coupled with a lack of knowledge and understanding across stakeholders. An Employment First Service Guidebook was collaboratively developed to help with providing better information. (Page 354) Title IV

Iowa has received technical assistance support through the Office of Disability and Employment.
## Iowa (IA) WIOA Matrix

Policy and shared training options with Iowa partners. Iowa was an original pilot project and is now recognized as a leader in the provision of Employment First practices. The continued focus of community provider transformation efforts, the Community of Practice Webinars and continued participation with Subject Matter Experts as identified by ODEP and the Department of Labor all provide opportunities for continued expansion and improved service delivery for individuals with the most significant disabilities in competitive integrated employment.

IVRS has also implemented benefits planning services as part of a “best practices” approach to service delivery. Any Social Security recipient who comes to IVRS for services has staff available to address concerns they may have with benefits. Ongoing training has been provided to staff at IVRS to help ensure this service remains available in every IVRS office. (Page 355)

### Title IV

This remains a priority of the State Rehabilitation Council, and has been the driving force behind Iowa Employment First. Improvements have occurred because of changing the IVRS Menu of Service Manual based on feedback from community surveys.

IVRS has established a commitment to continuing partnerships with the Iowa Association of Community Providers member network and spoken at several of their meetings. IVRS has also revisited collaborative efforts with the Iowa Department of Human Services, Iowa Medicaid System.

IVRS continues to offer joint training to CRP partners to keep staff updated in best practice approaches in service delivery. Seen below are the following topics that are - or have been offered - through IVRS Community of Practice opportunities:

- Success Stories in Utilizing an Integrated Resource Team
- Utilizing the Positive Personal Profile to Capture & Showcase Information Learned in Discovery
- Successful Transition Practices & Partnering with Schools
- Business Engagement Strategies to Support Successful Employment Outcomes
- Iowa's Success Stories
- The Role of Person-Centered Planning in Achieving Integrated Employment Outcomes
- Discovery and Customized Employment
- WIOA & Section 511 (Page 358) Title IV

Taking into consideration the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Increasing Competitive Integrated Employment for individuals with Disabilities, which was tasked to review ways to increase employment for individuals with disabilities, IVRS has prioritized service areas relating to expansion of early work experiences, establishing high expectations, and
Iowa (IA) WIOA Matrix

a focus on business driven demand needs. Communication is continuing in coordination efforts within waiver programs to increase effectiveness.

IVRS will review emerging practices and identify ways to integrate recommended practices and strategies into service delivery. IVRS has utilized expanded practices in implementing the Employment First effort, in expanding contract use as well as in supporting partnership with the Independent Living Centers in expanding support and resources for individuals with the most significant disabilities in supported employment. (Page 361) Title IV

Internally, IVRS staff experienced a learning curve in implementing the provisions of WIOA. The intensive service model requires that systems distinguish individuals who require intensive VR services and understand the Employment First philosophy. Staff need to determine the right strategies and supports for all individuals who want to work. Efforts to refine their skills are continuing to be addressed with assistance from Subject Matter Experts, innovative pilot practices and ongoing training. In 2017, IVRS hired a Training Resource Manager who is creating a professional development training series for all staff. There are individual tracks for different job classifications that allow for further drilling into expertise areas. (Page 362) Title IV

Employment First opportunities are continuing to draw attention to Iowa and facilitate changes in our systems. Iowa’s efforts have been enhanced through the collaboration occurring between a variety of systems and entities that serve individuals with disabilities. Close communication is provided by IVRS to agencies under contract with IVRS in the provision of Supported Employment Services (SES).

Community Provider organizations participated in initial SES pilots that involve new service delivery options such as Discovery and Customized Employment. IVRS initially had a focus on provider transformation, but this past year has moved towards capacity building. The EF philosophy helped to provide a framework to build upon and establish a common purpose to unite forces in Iowa. For the past three fiscal years, IVRS realized an increase in the number of individuals served through supported employment services. As a result, this increase produced a higher number of job candidates served through the Employment First initiative and through the formal supported employment services. (Page 363) Title IV

The Iowa Coalition for Integrated Employment is a current initiative that brings together a diverse set of stakeholders representing all levels of service and interest in employment options for Iowans with disabilities. ICIE is the result of a five-year grant awarded by the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. ICIE includes a base consortium of representatives from the Development Disabilities Council, the Iowa Department of Education, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Disability Rights Iowa, the Iowa Department of Human Rights, and the Department of Human Services to improve systems so that Iowa youth with disabilities have fully integrated and competitive work opportunities. The overall goal of ICIE has been to improve systems so that individuals with disabilities, including those with intellectual disabilities, have fully integrated, competitive work, regardless of where they live in the state. ICIE has been a key collaborator with innovative braiding of funding to expand financial and technical assistance areas specifically related to Employment First and the delivery...
As previously discussed under sections f. and p. (Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment and Evaluation and Reports of Progress), IVRS continues to increase referral numbers and purchase services and supports from community rehabilitation providers. Data reflects an expanded array of services are being provided with an increase in numbers of job candidates being served.

Quality benchmarks such as length of time in service and outcome measures are being collected through the CRP Annual Report, which is provided by IVRS to all partners. This information also influences informed choice options as job candidates make decisions on which providers they want to work with. IVRS involvement with Employment First efforts and the leveraged resources working with the Iowa Coalition for Integrated Employment and the Disability Employment Initiative enhanced the scope and outreach of program efforts. Significant changes have occurred with the alignment of funding and the Menu of Services that have expanded to reflect the services needed for enhanced customized and supported employment services.

The IDB also works with Partners to resolve collaboration issues, promote innovative policies, procedures, and practices in service delivery and communicate those to local partners. The partners have determined that the indicator of success is the increased inclusion of persons with disabilities in the workforces of local communities. In a data snapshot of Partner agencies, there was an increase in community employment. The Partners will continue to review this information and revise the measures as we move forward with WIOA. The Partners also recognized that there are approximately 110,000 Iowan’s who might benefit from SSA disability benefits planning services. Some of these individuals are served by a variety of agencies. The Department for the Blind is focused on services being provided in the community, in integrated and competitive environments. Due to the state’s shift of services from facility-based to community-based placements, there will be a need for increased individuals needing benefits planning. Partner agencies have begun to determine the feasibility of establishing a benefits planning network that will identify approved training opportunities for Iowa benefits planners, to provide technical assistance to trainers, and to develop referral processes for SSA recipients not currently connected to the service delivery system. The Department for the Blind participates in activities with other Partner agencies to cooperate as well as involve community partners, families and education in implementing an Employment First approach. The Department of Human Services and IDB have not developed a formal agreement at this time. IDB has taken steps to reach out to DHS partners to begin the development of a formal agreement to establish collaborative efforts and to reduce duplication of services. The IDB has also worked with Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services to develop an agreement to identify collaborative efforts and to reduce duplication of services. Both agencies agree to share resources, discuss strategies, provide training and technical assistance and provide referral and information services, while also coordinating cases that are shared between the two agencies.
### Iowa (IA) WIOA Matrix

Iowa providers in receiving direct subject matter expertise for competitive integrated employment strategies. These efforts of provider transformation, along with monthly Community of Practice webinars, positively impact customized employment service delivery and have increased numbers of individuals with the most significant disabilities (MSD) accessing competitive integrated employment.

IVRS expanded partnerships with private vendors for specific employment services. In addition, IVRS executed a contract with the University of Iowa - Center for Disability and Development for employment services. CDD also completed their own statewide needs assessment in 2017 and we have had joint discussions regarding overlap of employment related issues. This has led to collaboration on a Kessler grant to support the use of technology in remote job coaching for select pilot sites. (Page 307) Title IV

Training begins with a business intake to learn about the business, then moves to a job analysis/task analysis so that recommendations can be made to help the business. This training is done classroom style, as well as in the business community; learning by doing with mentoring.

Because of training, staff and partners have learned the value of the job analysis, which has helped in making a better employment match for job candidates. Both IVRS staff and community partners have completed more job analyses since being trained. IVRS has had seen successful customized outcomes as a result of staff doing a better analysis with Iowa businesses! This is reflected in the actual employment outcome per the feedback of success stories from a job candidate. In several cases, the business has been willing to share their story and the value of the employment partnership. Videos outlining successful customized employment outcomes have been featuring Plastic Professionals, Omega Industries, Winnebago Industries, T & D Repair, Progress Industries and Kwik Trip as examples of customized employment value. These examples also share the value of the service delivery from the job candidate perspective. (Page 308) Title IV

IVRS efforts in coordinating with business partners helps foster competitive integrated employment. Customized employment strategies including Discovery and Customized employment continue to be refined within the IVRS system. Ongoing training has been made available to both staff and IVRS partners on providing these services, as well as services to businesses.

IVRS has prioritized business engagement to expand access to the trades industry and apprenticeships. The Iowa Workforce Center is a leader in the country with their emphasis on quality apprenticeship programs and IVRS collaborated with IWC during the past two years in training and outreach to apprenticeship programs attempting to identify opportunities to improve access for individuals with disabilities.

An initiative that grew in 2017 as part of this collaboration was beginning a partnership with the North Central States Regional Carpenter Council. Coordination occurred between the Nebraska VR offices, Iowa Job Corps, and Iowa VR. Key activities include:
Iowa (IA) WIOA Matrix

- Identifying a point of contact for each area partner.

- Receiving consistent communication from the Council on openings and employment needs.

- The Council should refer applicants and apprentices to VR when applicable. Referral information shared.

- Improved communication and referral from Job Corps to VR in efforts to better connect graduated students to needed supports for on-going success.

- Improve marketing awareness of the trades with all partners. VR will share information at schools and transition fairs.

- VR should be contacted as soon as possible by the Council regarding any needs.

- Tour training centers will be set up with a direct contact list available for all partners.

- Meeting rooms can be used at the training center for any appointments - this will expand awareness for all partners utilizing the facilities.

- Continued follow-up meetings will occur at six months to review if we are improving career connections.

- VR will continue transition efforts with local high school districts and their presence at the Denison, IA Job Corps Program.

- A cheat sheet will be developed with key partner contact names and information.

- Expand the use of social media and marketing by partners of the collaborative service delivery options. (Page 311) Title IV

The agency routinely uses the latest research and pilot projects to update training programs in areas such as assistive technology, mental illness, learning disabilities, autism, and head injury/traumatic brain injury. IVRS is the lead agency with the Employment First Initiative and both internal staff and IVRS partners have access to a myriad of customized employment training webinars.

IVRS also provides training on policy, motivational interviewing, benefits planning, and when new initiatives and issues arise, training is developed, coordinated and/or provided by the IVRS Training Specialist. Recent examples this past year have included external training coordination with the Epilepsy Foundation and the Iowa Brain Injury Alliance.

Standing committees exist to help disseminate information on a regular basis in the areas of Motivational Interviewing, business development and engagement, benefits planning and assistive technology. These committees help to keep field staff informed of best practices and preferred methods for service delivery. (Page 323) Title IV
Individuals with most significant disabilities, and their need for supported employment; are continually reviewed through our Resource Manager team positions which have roles and responsibilities in collaborative partnering with local area offices and service providers in addressing the needs of individuals requiring supported employment programming. This continues to be addressed as a required state plan goal. A CSNA was completed in November of 2015 and this was recently updated in the fall of 2017. Another CSNA will be completed in the fall of 2019 to prepare for the 2020-2023 State Plan. Since November 2015, Iowa has explored changes in relationship to service delivery for the provision of Supported Employment. IVRS has also experienced significant changes to the way services may be contracted with CRPs. This has required a series of trainings, both by video and in-person at local levels communicating the expectations for the delivery of the supported employment service as well as financial and program quality indicators. IVRS has participated with a federal Employment First Grant receiving technical assistance in provider transformation efforts as well as customized employment training for staff and partners. Through active participation with the Iowa Coalition for Integration and Employment, we are able to listen to families, service recipients and other stakeholders regarding observed needs and gaps in service. This is actually one of the roles also played by our State Rehabilitation Council Outreach committee. They are engaged in this process and help identify through the ICIE feedback, priority service delivery issues to better meet the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities in the area of SES. These efforts led to discussions and partnering with the Iowa Medicaid Enterprise System and the Department of Human Services to coordinate the service delivery in a better way. Current efforts are continuing to expand the communication, awareness and understanding of our local education agencies in their role for this population. The SRC has also provided direction and guidance regarding expectations for outreach to the Section 511 population which is integrated into service delivery efforts and SES programming. IVRS recognizes the need for continued communication to occur with CRP staff. Significant inroads have been made between IVRS and CRP partners. Of further note is the fact that a representative from a CRP was appointed by the Governor to the SRC. The following information pertains to other assessment strategies that IVRS has undertaken to help in service delivery and to ensure job candidates are receiving the employment services and the supported employment services necessary to attain and retain employment. (Page 326-327) Title IV

- IVRS utilizes Motivational Interviewing as an evidence-based counseling method. This technique is used in various areas, and especially when providing Pre-ETS (Counseling on Opportunities). Motivational Interviewing is a training topic that is led by the MI Cohort, and each office is connected to an MI Champion who can train and provide technique refreshers to local area office staff.  
- Discovery services and Assessment activities are funded by IVRS and used as a tool for transition students as a prelude to supported employment and customized employment. This is a best practice for students who will require intensive instructional training, assistive technology, and/or need career exploration and advocacy skill building.  
- Summer Programs leverage programming from community partners including IDB, IowaWORKS, and CRP providers. This allows participating students to access training and resources from a wider scope of services available from WIOA partners.  
- Education has been provided by IVRS to LEA staff, AEA administrators, and staff via fall meetings and throughout the school year regarding WIOA, service responsibilities, Pre-ETS and other pertinent legislation. (Page 337)
IVRS places significant priority on Supported Employment Services (SES). Individuals who are served in SES are those with the Most Significant Disabilities. Two additional employment services were implemented to support SES for individuals who have never worked or not experienced successful employment in a competitive integrated environment. These include “Discovery services and “Customized Employment.” Many SES Plans include the need for Customized Employment, and the IVRS Menu of Services has been updated to reflect this. (Page 343) Title IV

Outcomes for Supported Employment services are analyzed by IVRS annually. Expenditures on this service is tracked, along with recidivism rates, and closure information including hours worked and rates of pay. Alignment with Medicaid waiver funding occurred and system consistency has been enhanced. There has been a need for IVRS to provide ongoing training to address program changes and resolve issues created with Iowa’s new system of Managed Care. Implementation of new payment points and the development of Customized Employment and Supported Short-Term Paid Work Experience services have expanded employment options to individuals and students who are Most Significantly Disabled. Competitive integrated employment remains the ultimate goal for individuals accessing IVRS.

Supported Employment Service outcomes have continued to increase over the last three years, reflecting 382 successful outcomes in 2016 and 406 in 2017. As seen in the chart below, each progressive year, IVRS has demonstrated improvement. (Page 363-364) Title IV

The Department continues to develop relationships with community rehabilitation providers and educational partners to obtain referrals for career exploration and vocational rehabilitation services to individuals. The Department promotes competitive and integrated employment for individuals receiving supported employment services. Policy will be changed to allow for the provision of extended services to youth with the most significant disabilities for up to 4 years or until the individual turns age 25, whichever comes first, as well as increasing extended services from 18 to 24 months as stated in the WIOA. Customized Employment has been added as a vocational rehabilitation service option. (Page 421) Title IV

Braiding/Blending Resources

No disability specific information found regarding this element.

DEI/Disability Resource Coordinators

The IVRS Business Consultant has been involved in training staff at many levels; including state, regional and national conferences and webinars. In-person trainings include Iowa Association of Providers conference and the Iowa APSE (Association of Persons Supporting Employment First) conference. National webinar trainings include: Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) on Reverse Job Fairs; Work-Based Learning webinar and Community-Business-School relationships sponsored by NTACT (National Transition Assistance Center on Transition); Cornell University’s Employer Engagement: Meeting Business Needs, Adding Value; and ODEP’s (Office of Disability Policy) webinar on Increasing Employer Engagement.
Iowa (IA) WIOA Matrix

in partnership with the IVRS administrator. This has increased visibility of Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation business engagement efforts and resulted in IVRS earning a reputation as a proactive and innovative partner. (Page 308) Title IV

The Iowa Coalition for Integrated Employment is a current initiative that brings together a diverse set of stakeholders representing all levels of service and interest in employment options for Iowans with disabilities. ICIE is the result of a five-year grant awarded by the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. ICIE includes a base consortium of representatives from the Development Disabilities Council, the Iowa Department of Education, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Disability Rights Iowa, the Iowa Department of Human Rights, and the Department of Human Services to improve systems so that Iowa youth with disabilities have fully integrated and competitive work opportunities. The overall goal of ICIE has been to improve systems so that individuals with disabilities, including those with intellectual disabilities, have fully integrated, competitive work, regardless of where they live in the state. ICIE has been a key collaborator with innovative braiding of funding to expand financial and technical assistance areas specifically related to Employment First and the delivery of supported employment services in Iowa.

The Disability and Employment Initiative through IWD/DOL has also been a key collaborator and partner in increasing employment outcomes. The DEI project has enhanced communication and awareness through their local projects with an Integrated Resource Team, financial literacy strategies and benefits planning. (Page 365) Title IV

Employment Specialists connect with employers on a national level through involvement in the National Employment Team (NET). Participation in NET allows Employment Specialists to learn about employment opportunities and career development resources, in addition to addressing employer hiring needs, providing information regarding disability awareness, retention assistance, accommodations, and other support services. Participation in the NET also allows access to the Talent Acquisition Portal which is used by national companies to fulfill their diversity and inclusion efforts. Other disability minded networks of professionals are the Disability Access Committee's and the Disability Employment Initiative (DEI). Partnering in both of these groups allows IDB to have presence in a regional and localized manner to discuss and plan for disability related strategies. (Page 393) Title IV

Financial Literacy/Economic Advancement

The IVRS Business Consultant has been involved in training staff at many levels; including state, regional and national conferences and webinars. In-person trainings include Iowa Association of Providers conference and the Iowa APSE (Association of Persons Supporting Employment First) conference. National webinar trainings include: Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) on Reverse Job Fairs; Work-Based Learning webinar and Community-Business-School relationships sponsored by NTACT (National Transition Assistance Center on Transition); Cornell University’s Employer Engagement: Meeting Business Needs, Adding Value; and ODEP’s (Office of Disability Policy) webinar on Increasing Employer Engagement, in partnership with the IVRS administrator. This has increased visibility of Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation business engagement efforts and resulted in IVRS earning a reputation as a
Iowa (IA) WIOA Matrix

proactive and innovative partner.

Additionally, IVRS’ Business Consultant had an opportunity to participate in a financial literacy Train-the-Trainer program sponsored by the FDIC (Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation) and CFPB (Consumer Financial Protection Bureau). Once trained, IVRS staff held a training in Des Moines for internal staff, Center for Independent Living staff and VR regional staff. The Business Consultant also partnered with CSAVR (Council of State Administration of Vocational Rehabilitation) to provide this training to VR nationally. (Page 308) Title IV

IVRS also provides training on policy, motivational interviewing, benefits planning, and when new initiatives and issues arise, training is developed, coordinated and/or provided by the IVRS Training Specialist. Recent examples this past year have included external training coordination with the Epilepsy Foundation and the Iowa Brain Injury Alliance.

Standing committees exist to help disseminate information on a regular basis in the areas of Motivational Interviewing, business development and engagement, benefits planning and assistive technology. These committees help to keep field staff informed of best practices and preferred methods for service delivery.

A priority over the past year has been training in the area of pre-employment transition services and financial literacy. Our training coordinator developed curriculum, which was demonstrated on-site in every office across the state. (Page 323) Title IV

The structure IVRS uses to provide proper service delivery and identify expectations, responsibilities, documentation requirements and payment schedules for SES and other employment services is outlined in all service contracts and posted the IVRS Internet. Each area office is provided training on contracting for Supported Employment Services annually. Training tools are also made available to staff that include: recorded webinars; resource documents; cheat sheets; how-to guides; service delivery manuals; sample reports; in addition to onsite meetings available to internal staff and external partners of IVRS who provide SES. In January of 2017, a training specialist position was hired internally to better address internal and external training needs of not only the agency, but IVRS partner programs. Specific focus has been on orientation and training of new staff, expanded on-boarding strategies, better linkages to our degree training programs, expanded internship opportunities, expanded training and awareness in financial literacy, motivation interviewing, Pre-Employment Transition Services, business services and the use of technology for improved work effectiveness. Since November of 2015, IVRS updated our Scope of Vocational Rehabilitation policy to encourage staff to support employment goals that enhance the individual’s skill development and supports the State of Iowa’s business community by encouraging individuals to secure employment in Fast Track career jobs or STEM careers. Through the expansion of services that connect with business and industry, IVRS creates fundamental linkages with the business community in a manner that strengthens informed choice and develops the labor pool needed by Iowa’s business community. An IVRS Business Specialist is assigned to provide training services to staff regarding making linkages with businesses; as well as providing services to businesses and community providers as well. Other strategies to refine service delivery include: • Policy review and implementation has been changed to include the integration of the Coordination Council, which is an internal review and consultation team
**Iowa (IA) WIOA Matrix**

working alongside the efforts of the VR Service Delivery Team of the SRC Committee. •
Templates for SES employment services and scenario/examples have been developed and
enhanced through input from community providers. • Local School Plans have been established
by field staff in each of the high school districts in Iowa. • Memorandum of Agreements have
been signed between IVRS and the Iowa Department of Education and the Iowa Department of
Human Services to outline service responsibilities for SES. • Partnership Plus agreements have
been expanded with an emphasis and moderate growth in Ticket to Work handoffs occurring at
the time of VR closure. IVRS has a staff person assigned to helping provide overview and
training to Benefit Planning staff. • Individual Plans for Employment were revised to include
Pre-Employment Transition Services along with a projected post-school outcome goal for high
school students. (Page 330) Title IV

**School to Work Transition**

Collaborative Transition Protocol (CTP)

CTP aligns secondary school IEP and IVRS IPE also providing Student Accommodation Reports
for smoother postsecondary transition. Collaborative training is occurring at secondary,
postsecondary and VR levels with disability support services

**BENEFITS PLANNING**

Benefits planning provides analysis and assistance for economic independence to individuals on
SSI/SSDI.

**IWD/IVRS Pilot Project**

Five one stop centers are working with VR to improve work flow efficiencies through improved
intake and data sharing linkages, enhanced wrap-around supports cross-system and streamlined
processes. (Page 58) Title I

**IDB operates a Career Resource Center for Iowans with visual impairments which provides
accessible technology, equipment and software to be used to prepare, gain and maintain skills
and credentials needed for employment.**

**Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services and the Division of Elementary and Secondary
Education has an agreement that outlines shared responsibilities between IVRS and the Division
of Elementary and Secondary Education to prepare youth with disabilities for successful
competitive, integrated community employment. Through this agreement IVRS has ready access
to the student’s IEPs that are on the IVRS caseload, which allows for a more timely development
of the IVRS eligibility justification (within 60 days) and the individual plan for employment
(within 90 days). This Memorandum of Agreement expands beyond the previous agreement and
provides greater direction and support to the local IEP teams. This agreement describes roles and**
IVRS staff serve on the Future Ready Iowa Work Group and reports back to SRC on this group’s efforts to achieve the Governor’s goals. Information was shared from the statewide committee for the Iowa National Governor’s Association (NGA), which is integrating work-based learning opportunities for Iowans. The NGA awarded a grant to the State of Iowa to scale work-based learning to connect Iowa’s youth with Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) middle skill careers. The grant provides a written agreement of structured activities for secondary transition services. This information was reflected in the Annual Report submitted to Iowa’s Governor by the SRC in December. Priorities were established to expand training and awareness of work-based learning opportunities as this is a critical priority established in the Future Ready Iowa goals. This is also a key focus of Pre-Employment Transition Services and VR transition service delivery for students and youth with disabilities. Collaborative partnerships are occurring in various regions with workforce partners to identify service strategies for this population. (Pages 292-293) Title I

IVRS developed a transition strategic plan to expand services for students with disabilities. Progress is occurring; as in 2016, VR served 33% of the students with a disability, and in 2017, that percentage increased to 51%. IVRS and SRC members work together to provide collective responses to incorporate policies and procedures from input received from external partners. SRC members also routinely review survey information from IVRS consumers related to their satisfaction levels with agency services. The SRC did work with Dr. Darlene Grooms, through a consultation project on quality improvement. This led to discussion on the strategic plan to focus on the following areas: Visionary Leadership; Customer Focus; Valuing Employees and partners; Managing for innovation; Management by Facts; and Focus on Results and creating value. Consistent trends that were identified include developing working relationships with business and industry, communication regarding transition initiatives, and implementing the use of technology to increase field staff efficiencies. Other activities in which the SRC helps IVRS advance its goals and mission involve Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS). The SRC has supported IVRS initiatives such as Future Ready Iowa, Intermediary Network contracts, Making the Grade, Transition Alliance Programs, Project Search programs, STEM Career Camps, TEAM (Transitioning to Employment and Advocating for Myself), iJAG (Iowa Jobs for America’s Graduates) have been supported. IVRS staff also informed SRC members of work being done with the Microsoft training academy to help job candidates seeking credentialing in Microsoft products. SRC members are provided quarterly updates about Iowa’s progress in the Employment First initiative. Iowa is the lead agency with the Department of Labor Office of Disability and Employment Policy Employment First project. As part of Iowa’s 2017 Employment First plan, there was a focus in Ottumwa, Iowa, in partnership with the South Central Behavioral Health Region. Priority areas involved provider transformation and staff capacity for four targeted providers and building networking skills for the region in the area of business engagement. A similar initiative is currently underway in two other parts of the state (Des Moines and Cedar Rapids) with a focus on improving staff capacity. SRC members were
Iowa (IA) WIOA Matrix

Informed about IVRS’ new grant initiative with Nebraska, with a focus on the Sioux City/Council Bluffs corridor. Iowa VR supported a grant that garnered RSA funding. Staff will be hired to look at closed cases of job candidates in these areas: health care, engineering, transportation and logistics, and advanced manufacturing. The plan is for VR to upgrade these candidate’s skill levels and create a pathway to fill with new job candidates providing advanced credentialing to further career advancement. SRC members also supported communication with the Omaha Indian Tribe of Nebraska and the development of a MOA to foster collaboration with our common job candidates. Recent guest speakers at the SRC ranged from representatives from the IVRS Self-Employment and Independent Living programs, to the Iowa Coalition for Integration and Employment (ICIE). (Page 293) Title I

The above description is an example of the initiatives being offered by the school district to expand work-based experiential learning to all students. The Innovative Learning Coordinator at Boone High School, through collaboration with the principal and other teachers, identified gaps in access to the continuum projects for certain levels of students. This specific project is a new program expanding opportunities for students with disabilities. One hundred percent of the focus of this project is on students with disabilities served through the Boone Community School District who are eligible for services through an IEP or 504 plan. Boone Community School District will provide these services through a sub-contract with the Iowa Jobs for America Graduates Program (iJAG). The staff specialist for the project will track their time through a daily Personnel Allocation Report. IVRS staff are coordinating service delivery efforts and monitoring progress. (Page 299) Title I

WIOA requires that 15% of the budget be allocated towards the provision of Pre-Employment Transition Services. IVRS has developed policy surrounding the provision of Pre-ETS service delivery. Each school district in Iowa is to develop a collaborative plan coordinated with IVRS that addresses the service gaps at that particular school, and responsibilities for who will deliver the service(s). IVRS staff have access to students in the schools in order to provide quality services and schools are recognizing the value that IVRS brings. The goal of these efforts is for each student with a disability to become aware of the Pre-ETS services available to them and is able to receive those services from IVRS or a comparable service. Efforts to coordinate delivery of transition services with our education partners are occurring. A series of training webinars are occurring in the spring of 2018 to assist in local education agencies and school districts as well as IVRS staff having common knowledge of terms and definitions pertaining to instructional training, job coaching, and extended school year supports. The goal being that students, whether potentially eligible or eligible, leave high school prepared to pursue post-secondary training and/or employment. IVRS has laid the groundwork for the expansion of relationships within the Department of Education, Area Education Agencies, and Local Education Agencies. IVRS is seeking alternative ways to provide Pre-ETS through expansion of relationships and third-party contracts. During 2016 - 2017, contracts were implemented by IVRS at 14 of Iowa’s 15 community colleges, specifically targeting service delivery for secondary school students with disabilities under an IEP or 504 plan. The focus of these contracts provided Intermediary Network (IN) staff tasked with increasing work-based learning opportunities for this targeted
population. This initiative was developed through a collaboration with the Iowa Department of Education and the Community Colleges Division. Contracts with LEAs, INs and Community Rehabilitation Programs have created partnerships that allow for expansion of Pre-ETS delivery at the local level, and increase IVRS’ capacity to provide quality services. IVRS has a current Memorandum of Agreement within the Department of Education. This MOA outlines shared responsibilities between IVRS and the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education to prepare students with disabilities for successful competitive integrated employment. Through this Agreement, IVRS has ready access to a student’s IEPs who are on the IVRS caseload, which allows for timely development of the IVRS eligibility justification (within 60 days), and the individual plan for employment (within 90 days) and prior to the exit of high school. This Memorandum of Agreement expands beyond the previous agreement and provides greater direction and support to local IEP teams. This agreement describes roles and responsibilities of both agencies, and also assigns financial obligations. This agreement was amended in 2017 to identify the manner in which schools address their responsibilities to students in special education programs under WIOA. (A copy of the MOA is available on the IVRS website.) (Page 301) Title IV

IVRS counselors and educators are both responsible for the development and completion of the employment component of a student’s Individual Education Program (IEP) in concert with the student, the parents, and the IEP team. IVRS involvement in the IEP development and completion is determined by individual student need - not student age or grade.

Students, who require more intensive services in order to learn, understand and apply the information from Pre-ETS activities, are encouraged to submit an application for IVRS. Intense services may not be provided without the student having been determined eligible and served under an Individual Plan for Employment (IPE).

IVRS staff review information for students who submit an application for services, and AEAs/LEAs share existing information, which assists IVRS in determining a student’s eligibility. If needed, students participate in additional assessment(s) to determine eligibility services. The scheduling of these assessment(s) involve collaboration between IVRS, LEA and AEA staff members.

Once an eligibility determination is made by IVRS, that decision is shared with the LEA and AEA staff. This information is considered as part of the student’s transition plan within the IEP.

IVRS counselors develop an IPE for each individual determined to be eligible for IVRS within 90 days of being removed from the IVRS waiting list. The student, parents, educators, and IVRS counselors collaborate so that the goals of the IEP and VR’s IPE are consistent with one another.

Each division is responsible for the costs incurred as part of their responsibilities under the current MOA. (Page 304) Title IV

When the individual being served is an adult and Supported Employment is a required service,
the agreement with the Department of Human Services is implemented for funding (see MOA between IVRS and the DHS). If the individual being served is a student, then IVRS supports the student in Supported Employment in accordance with the agreement with the Department of Education. Regardless of the individual being served, IVRS does not allow a delay in service if the individual is on a waiting list or beginning application for services from a comparable benefit.

When a high school student needs assistance in obtaining paid part-time work, IVRS may fund a “Supported Short-Term Paid Work Experience.” This service is determined after discussion with the student’s IEP team. Supported Short-Term Paid Work Experiences are for students who are Most Significantly Disabled (MSD) since they are considered career exploration services during the student’s transition process; thus a component of the IEP. (Page 306) Title IV

IVRS has a close working relationship with the bureau responsible for Special Education within the Iowa Department of Education. IVRS counselors participate in IEP meetings and provide information and referral services to high schools for students that are on waiting lists that are not being served. Pre-Employment Transition Services are made available to potentially eligible students as well as to those students in eligible status. IVRS and school districts are participating in initiatives to provide summer services to students with disabilities. In these initiatives, joint training is provided to IVRS staff and school personnel so that resources of each entity can be appropriately utilized for improved student outcomes. (Page 324-325) Title IV

The IVRS program has been designed to provide a continuum of VR services by offering Pre-Employment Transition Services to any student with a disability in an educational program receiving special education services under an IEP or who are covered under the provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, regardless of whether the student has applied for or been determined eligible for VR services. IVRS counselors are active in all public schools in the State of Iowa. Counselors are integrated into the school culture, and collaborate with LEA staff on services. IVRS staff work directly with a variety of school staff, including, but not limited to, Special Education Teachers, AEA, School Administration and School Counselors. Through this collaboration, students who are on an IEP or served under the provision of a 504 plan are identified their freshman year of high school. Staff collaborate to provide Pre-ETS services all four years of high school as needed by a student. As counselors provide Pre-ETS services in the schools, they are working 1:1 and in groups with students who are either active, or Potentially Eligible. Students get to know the counselor and learn about the strategies to assist them in building their employment skills. Students, parents, teachers or any interested person can request VR services at any point in the process. Information will be shared with the student and family with consideration given for decision making to occur depending upon legal age. If it is apparent through counselor observation or through any school personnel and/or the job candidate or family member or employment services staff, that the student will require intensive services to successfully access employment, training, post-secondary education, or any other employment-related service, IVRS staff will meet with the individual student to discuss VR service options.
Iowa (IA) WIOA Matrix

and determine eligibility for services, pending agreement by the student and their parent/guardian. IVRS staff employ a workforce model that uses a team approach to providing transition services. Utilization of Counselors, Associates, and Rehabilitation Assistants allows for increased capacity when serving high schools. IVRS works with LEA’s via a collaborative process to create the school plan that outlines gaps in services in order to develop new or expanded activities in each of the required Pre-ETS areas. All students who apply for vocational rehabilitation services, even if they are still receiving Pre-Employment Transition Services, are subject to all relevant requirements for eligibility, order of selection and the development of the IPE. IVRS partners with the LEA’s and WIOA partners such as IowaWorks, Iowa Department for the Blind and Iowa Community Colleges. Through these partnerships, IVRS is able to streamline service delivery and make referrals when needed. IVRS developed a MOA with Department of Education at the state level to outline roles and responsibilities between IVRS, LEAs and the DE. IVRS does not supplant or duplicate the services provided by the LEA, which is clearly outlined in the local school plans. The local plans outline responsibilities to maximize staff and community resources. (Page 335) Title IV

IVRS has a host of direct business services that can be offered to local businesses in conjunction with the activities of the business services efforts in each region. Examples include disability etiquette training, job analysis, ADA accessibility surveys, WEPs (trainee OJTs), employee OJTs, consultation on ergonomics and accommodations, and assistive technology assessments, assistance in obtaining appropriate devices, and training in the use of the devices. Strategies for fostering collaboration that are being developed include: VR availability on-site, Secondary school collaboration, Ticket-to-Work handoffs under Partnership Plus, Business Service teams, Joint staff meetings, Cross trainings, Disability Access Committees, Job Fairs, Reverse Job Fairs, Speaker engagement, Summer work readiness programs, Participation in board meetings, Shared calendars, and Veteran service delivery. (Page 355-356) Title IV

iii. Only one credential is counted toward the performance measure in each period of participation.

e. Measurable Skill Gains: the percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skills gains, defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress, towards such a credential or employment. Included in the indicator are VR participants with education or a training program that leads to a recognized secondary or post-secondary credential on the individual’s IPE. Depending on the type of educational or training program, documented progress is defined as one of the following:
Iowa (IA) WIOA Matrix

i. Documented achievement of at least one education functioning level of a participant who is receiving instruction below the postsecondary education level.

1. Comparison of the participant’s initial educational functioning level, as measured by a pre-test, with the participant’s educational functioning level, as measured by a post-test;

2. Credits or Carnegie Units awarded by an adult high school program that leads to a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;

3. Exit from a basic education program and enrollment in post-secondary education and training during the same program year.

ii. Documented attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent;

iii. Secondary or postsecondary transcript or report card for a sufficient number of credit hours that shows a participant is meeting the State unit’s academic standards. (Page 366-367) Title IV

VR counselors encourage transition—age youth and their families to apply for services as early as age 14 as established by IDEA and the Rehabilitation Act. Once an application is complete, eligibility must be determined. The counselor assists a student in the development of his/her Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) within 90 days from eligibility determination and prior to exit from High School for VR services. VR counselors coordinate with other members of the IEP team to ensure that students participate in work—based learning experiences and paid work experiences prior to high school graduation. Experiences take place in integrated settings in the community; settings that are in segregated environments are discouraged and avoided. Pre-employment Transition services are provided by vocational rehabilitation counselors, vocational rehabilitation teachers, employment specialists, and other appropriate staff. In addition, IDB does partner with Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services, local school districts, and the Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired to provide services to students with disabilities. IDB also contracts with community rehabilitation programs for the provision of pre-employment transition services. Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors also partner with local workforce providers to provide pre-employment transition services, specifically for work-based learning experiences, job exploration counseling and work-readiness skills. (Page 385) Title IV

IDB—Sponsored Programs. The Iowa Department for the Blind LEAP Program is dedicated to providing meaningful and high quality vocational rehabilitation services to blind and low vision students with disabilities from across the state. The Program provides many opportunities for these students to develop the confidence and skills necessary for seamless transitions to life after high school. The focus of LEAP is to motivate and assist students with disabilities to: learn skills for independence and workplace readiness; explore careers and educational opportunities; learn to advocate and take charge of their future, and; prepare for the future through work—based learning experiences in integrated settings.(Page 387) Title IV

IVIDB and IESBVI are working together to provide information and training to K-12 students
and their families at annual Spring Vision Conferences. In addition, each entity is providing the other with training. For example, IDB will provide IESBVI staff with training and information about vocational rehabilitation at their annual Summer Institute as well as their annual Fall Vision Conference. IESBVI is providing IDB with training about the educational processes during a quarterly staff in-service meeting. The Department transition specialist works closely with the transition and family services coordinator for IESBVI; these individuals regularly discuss programs, potential referrals, processes, collaboration opportunities and potential improvements to transition programs and services. These efforts are all designed to improve communication, training, and knowledge among transition teams working with blind and visually impaired students. The Department continues to work to build relationships within communities across the state in efforts to connect students in high school with VR services. IDB counseling staff works with Regional Workforce Investment Boards and Transition Advisory Committees to inform them of the program and to develop work experience and career exploration opportunities for the transition students in integrated settings. IDB has also developed an internal Youth Employment Services team to bring together the different divisions of the agency to further discuss ways to improve and expand VR services. IDB has also developed several programs to expand the delivery of vocational rehabilitation services, including pre-employment transition services, to students who are blind or visually impaired. (Page 426) Title IV

IDB—Sponsored Programs. The Iowa Department for the Blind LEAP Program is dedicated to providing meaningful and high quality vocational rehabilitation services to blind and low vision students with disabilities from across the state. The Program provides many opportunities for these students to develop the confidence and skills necessary for seamless transitions to life after high school. The focus of LEAP is to motivate and assist students with disabilities to: learn skills for independence and workplace readiness; explore careers and educational opportunities; learn to advocate and take charge of their future, and; prepare for the future through work—based learning experiences in integrated settings. (Page 387) Title IV

IDB and IESBVI are working together to provide information and training to K-12 students and their families at annual Spring Vision Conferences. In addition, each entity is providing the other with training. For example, IDB will provide IESBVI staff with training and information about vocational rehabilitation at their annual Summer Institute as well as their annual Fall Vision Conference. IESBVI is providing IDB with training about the educational processes during a quarterly staff in-service meeting. The Department transition specialist works closely with the transition and family services coordinator for IESBVI; these individuals regularly discuss programs, potential referrals, processes, collaboration opportunities and potential improvements to transition programs and services. These efforts are all designed to improve communication, training, and knowledge among transition teams working with blind and visually impaired students. The Department continues to work to build relationships within communities across the state in efforts to connect students in high school with VR services. IDB counseling staff works with Regional Workforce Investment Boards and Transition Advisory Committees to inform them of the program and to develop work experience and career exploration opportunities for the transition students in integrated settings. IDB has also developed an internal Youth Employment Services team to bring together the different divisions of the agency to further discuss ways to improve and expand VR services. IDB has also developed several programs to expand the delivery of vocational rehabilitation services, including pre-employment transition services, to students who are blind or visually impaired. (Page 426) Title IV
## Iowa (IA) WIOA Matrix

Services team to bring together the different divisions of the agency to further discuss ways to improve and expand VR services. IDB has also developed several programs to expand the delivery of vocational rehabilitation services, including pre-employment transition services, to students who are blind or visually impaired. (Page 426) Title IV

Number of referrals received through the Iowa Educational Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired. - All eligible individuals will have well-developed and supported individualized plans for employment that provide them with the education & training plans needed to achieve their career goal. Measure: Number of individuals successfully employed in competitive and integrated employment. - We will advocate that all eligible or potentially eligible youth will have well-developed individualized education plans that align with their career goals. Measure: Number of students who have IEP goals aligned with their career goal. (Page 428) Title IV

Engage Iowa’s youth in the career path development process using creative, progressive, and self-directed techniques in the delivery of career services. Measure: Percentage of students that have IEP goals that align with their career path interests. - IDB will ensure IPE goals reflect the clients’ knowledge, skills, abilities, and interests and the activities they engage in will align with career pathway. Measure: Percentage of services provided that align with the IPE goals. - IDB will promote participation in career pathways to meet business sector and consumer employment needs. Measure: Percentage of successfully closed cases who acquired skill gains toward credential or employment. (Page 429) Title IV

### Career Pathways

Administrative Services Bureau provides support to the other elements of the Division through the functions of fiscal accounting, budgeting and payroll; statistical records, reporting and closed case file control; personnel management and collective bargaining administration; purchasing and property control; information systems and the physical plant management of the Jessie Parker Building. The Office of the Administrator is responsible for overall administration of the statewide programs. The administrator determines program scope and policies, promotes public interest and acceptance, directs budget funds, develops program plans and provides for staff development, research and evaluation. Under the umbrella of the administrator are the State Rehabilitation Council and the Community Rehabilitation Program Advisory Group. (Page 58) Title IV

Sector Partnerships — IVRS area offices are involved and engaged in sector partnerships. At the state level, IVRS has representation on the statewide Career Pathways and Sector Partnership Advisory Boards and involved in policy development that addresses accessibility issues. At the local level, the sector partnerships are locally developed workforce partners that serve specific industry sectors by providing a talent pool of eligible job candidates, as well as technical assistance to business and industry regarding their specific questions and needs. The Burlington Area Office has one IVRS employee on each sector partnership which has proven to be a systemic approach to placement. This allows one team to serve the business, and when a member of the team resigns or retires, a new member from the organization is then placed on the partnership. In this manner, businesses receive services in a continuous fashion, the relationship is built with the partnership, and there is not any gap in service delivery to the business. (Page
Integration in One Stops may include joint staff meetings, shared business partners, and technical assistance or evaluation by IVRS. The focus of integration should support a job seeker to achieve employment with available services and supports from a One Stop team. Involvement in services from IVRS is based on a person’s need for intensive services or necessary supports that are not available through Workforce Development. If a job seeker does not have a disability, IVRS is not generally involved; however, there may be questions IVRS is asked related to program and/or building access.

IVRS and IWD staffs create a braided service that no longer “hands-off” an individual between programs but instead, works together to achieve common outcomes. IVRS connects with Career Pathways training, National Career Readiness Certification, Adult Education and Literacy, etc., and provides technical assistance to these programs as applicable. IVRS coordinates the Individual Plan for Employment with the other partner’s plan for employment, creating a “short-term” to “long-term” employment plan that creates opportunities for self-sufficiency and middle skills development for an individual.

STRATEGY — IVRS staff will work with local education agencies to help them understand the career skill gap, programs available to students to become employed in Fast track career jobs, and career pathways that will lead to employment. IVRS will support STEM training to help students and youth achieve access in higher employment. IVRS will also provide counseling and guidance services on labor market information and the opportunities available with appropriate training. Information will be provided by IVRS to youth about internships, apprenticeship training and post-secondary options.

IVRS continues to promote the Employment first philosophy that work is the first and preferred option for all individuals, including youth. High expectations to build towards successful careers are discussed in initial conversations by IVRS, and staff are able to access students as early as age 14.

IVRS has invested resources in developing school-to-work programs to include various initiatives such as Project Search, TEAM, iJAG, Intermediary Networks, TAP, Making the Grade, all of which are specific to youth.

GOAL 3: Iowa will improve the structure, accessibility and administration of workforce delivery systems across the state. Iowa’s workforce delivery system will align all programs and services in an accessible, seamless and integrated manner.

**Apprenticeship**

VR-eligible students with disabilities, in select target areas, benefit from Earn and Learn programs. Earn and Learn programs exist for specific trades in collaboration with Community Colleges, Registered Apprenticeship programs and businesses. VR provides stipend and facilitates business involvement, communicates with secondary, postsecondary and business implementing pathway. Earn and Learn programs can lead to various OJT employment options.
Iowa (IA) WIOA Matrix

with a specific focus on employee needs and business needs. Efforts are being made to establish more dedicated integration with Registered Apprenticeship programs. IVRS has attended Career Pathways trainings and are finding more opportunities to network with RAP partners and connect students to RA and related programs. (Page 58) Title I

IWD recently received a grant to hire a Registered Apprenticeship Statewide Coordinator. IWD is contracting with the Department of Education to identify needs and gaps in the state’s Registered Apprenticeship programs and will be applying for the expansion grant to increase the state’s immediate and ongoing capacity to develop Registered Apprenticeship Programs. IWD will be working to build a model for Pre-Apprenticeships for out of school youth and for adults. IWD will be collaborating with IVRS in this process and looking at current successful IVRS programs which incorporate Registered Apprenticeships. (Page 122) Title I

Specifically, Youth Services will make connections to statewide support systems, increase and enhance youth engagement, and build the capacity of educators for encouraging movement through the pathway options. Registered Apprenticeships will engage educational training entities to identify and enhance career pathways for Apprenticeship options.

Intermediary Network

Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services (IVRS) plans to enter into a cooperative agreement with the Department of Education for the purposes of expanding the Intermediary Network with the focus of serving students with disabilities to connect with career pathways. IVRS will fund up to $1.5 million to support the Intermediary Network, which is delivered by the community college system. This expansion, focused on students with disabilities who have traditionally not been able to access career pathways, will develop the mechanism by which students with disabilities gain skills in occupations that are job-driven. This will be accomplished through improved work based learning strategies. (Pages 141-142) Title I

The Governor, with support of the Iowa Legislature, increased the state’s capacity to meet the rapidly evolving needs of employers through increased support to Registered Apprenticeship programs. In 2014, funding to support Registered Apprenticeship Programs was tripled. IWD recently received a grant to hire a Registered Apprenticeship Statewide Coordinator. IWD is contracting with the Department of Education to identify needs and gaps in the state’s Registered Apprenticeship programs and will be applying for the expansion grant to increase the state’s immediate and ongoing capacity to develop Registered Apprenticeship Programs. IWD will be working to build a model for Pre-Apprenticeships for out of school youth and for adults. IWD will be collaborating with IVRS in this process and looking at current successful IVRS programs which incorporate Registered Apprenticeships. Under WIOA, Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors that request to be Eligible Training Providers are automatically included on the list and will remain as long as the program is registered or until the program sponsor notifies the State that it no longer wants to be included on the list.

Registered Apprenticeship programs are not subject to the same application and performance information requirements or to a period of initial eligibility or initial eligibility procedures as other providers because they go through a detailed application and vetting procedure to become a
**Iowa (IA) WIOA Matrix**

registered apprenticeship program sponsor with the Department of Labor. These program sponsors must indicate their interest in being an Eligible Training Provider. Registered apprenticeship program sponsors will remain as long as the program is registered or until the program sponsor notifies Iowa Workforce Development that it no longer wants to be included on the list. The biennial review must also include verification of the registration status of registered apprenticeship programs. Within the state’s goals and throughout the plan and strategies there is a strong focus on RAP. (Page 224) Title I

IVRS efforts in coordinating with business partners helps foster competitive integrated employment. Customized employment strategies including Discovery and Customized employment continue to be refined within the IVRS system. Ongoing training has been made available to both staff and IVRS partners on providing these services, as well as services to businesses.

IVRS has prioritized business engagement to expand access to the trades industry and apprenticeships. The Iowa Workforce Center is a leader in the country with their emphasis on quality apprenticeship programs and IVRS collaborated with IWC during the past two years in training and outreach to apprenticeship programs attempting to identify opportunities to improve access for individuals with disabilities.

An initiative that grew in 2017 as part of this collaboration was beginning a partnership with the North Central States Regional Carpenter Council. Coordination occurred between the Nebraska VR offices, Iowa Job Corps, and Iowa VR. Key activities include:

- Identifying a point of contact for each area partner.
- Receiving consistent communication from the Council on openings and employment needs.
- The Council should refer applicants and apprentices to VR when applicable. Referral information shared.
- Improved communication and referral from Job Corps to VR in efforts to better connect graduated students to needed supports for on-going success.
- Improve marketing awareness of the trades with all partners. VR will share information at schools and transition fairs.
- VR should be contacted as soon as possible by the Council regarding any needs.
- Tour training centers will be set up with a direct contact list available for all partners.
- Meeting rooms can be used at the training center for any appointments - this will expand awareness for all partners utilizing the facilities.
- Continued follow-up meetings will occur at six months to review if we are improving career connections.
Iowa (IA) WIOA Matrix

• VR will continue transition efforts with local high school districts and their presence at the Denison, IA Job Corps Program.

• A cheat sheet will be developed with key partner contact names and information.

• Expand the use of social media and marketing by partners of the collaborative service delivery options. (Page 311) Title IV

Work Incentives and Benefits

The Iowa Rehabilitation Services System (IRSS) is an internal case management system that is owned, maintained, and updated by IVRS. The original concept of IRSS was the development of an interactive, intuitive system designed to meet agency needs for case management, financial management, contract management, vendor management and reporting. After many years of development and scale-backs on the scope of the project, IRSS was put into use in October, 2008. The system that was deployed at that time was developed to meet the data collection and financial needs of the agency. Limited reports were developed and included in the initial deployment to assist with case management. Shortly following implementation, the IVRS IRSS Priority Management Team (PMT) was formed and charged with the responsibility of developing improvements to the IRSS Case Management System to meet the financial, case management and reporting needs of the agency and move the system closer to the original concept. Representatives of the Rehabilitation Services Bureau and Administrative Services Bureau, in collaboration with IT developers and project managers, develop the projects and business rules for all IRSS development.

Over the past seven years, many improvements have been made to the system, including major projects to financial processing for Disability Determination Services, and batch processing of Ticket-to-Work data and revisions to streamline data entry and make IRSS more efficient. The IRSS PMT Committee has also been assigned the task of moving the agency to a paperless case management process to meet future needs. (Page 152) Title I

Partnership Plus agreements have been expanded with an emphasis and moderate growth in Ticket to Work handoffs occurring at the time of VR closure. IVRS has a staff person assigned to helping provide overview and training to Benefit Planning staff. • Individual Plans for Employment were revised to include Pre-Employment Transition Services along with a projected post-school outcome goal for high school students. • IVRS developed policies to ensure that students and youth with disabilities are provided those services mandated by WIOA, which include Pre-Employment Training Services. (Page 330) Title IV

Benefit Planning services are provided to each applicant of IVRS who receives Social Security benefits to allay fears about exploring community employment. The Benefit Planners designated at each area office receive specific training and connect to share information between them. There continues to be a need in the State of Iowa for improved access to highly skilled benefit planners for stakeholders who are not connected to VR. Iowa does have a Social Security Workforce Incentive and Planning Assistance (WIPA program), but the two staff have limited capacity to serve all Iowans needing this service. IVRS did commit to external training of
designated VR staff in benefits planning and continues to provide training opportunities for this cadre of staff in efforts to build internal capacity.

Exploration is currently occurring to develop a training program serving individuals with a diagnosis of autism. This involves a partnership with Village Northwest Community Rehabilitation Program and Northwest Iowa Community College. Efforts are being made to provide a CNC Machining program, which is in high demand in this area of the state. The intended program would help individuals participate in college-level training and work towards independent living and self-sufficiency. (Page 332) Title IV

The Employer’s Disability Resource Network (EDRN). This employer development team is a collaborative group of state, federal and local partners who are working together to identify, develop and mobilize resources, supports and services that add value to Iowa businesses hiring persons with disabilities. The EDRN seeks to increase employment of persons with disabilities by pooling agency resources and providing technical expertise to employers throughout the state. Members of this group include staff from the Department, Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Iowa Economic Development Authority, U.S. Small Business Administration, Department of Human Rights — Office of Persons with Disabilities and Office of Deaf Services, Iowa Workforce Development, U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, Easter Seals of Iowa, Goodwill Industries of Central Iowa, Department of Education and the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant program. Members of this group have presented and provided resources and assistance to employers and employer organizations throughout the state. In addition, the EDRN provides Iowa employers with access to qualified job applicants and are available to provide employers with information and support related to retaining quality employees who experience a disability.

Ticket to Work. The Department participates in the Ticket to Work program and utilizes the reimbursement process for recipients of Supplemental Security Income and Social Security Disability Insurance who are vocational rehabilitation clients seeking employment. (Page 382) Title IV

When considering the population of people with the most significant disabilities and most likely to benefit from supported employment, the best source of secondary data available is that which derives from the Social Security Administration (SSA). SSA reported that, in 2014, 10.40% of working age Iowans said they had a disability. Of these respondents, 42.95% indicated they were employed (as compared with 83.45% of respondents who did not have disabilities). Among people SSA identified as having a visual disability, 51.04% reported being employed. SSA also identified those people who were working age and were receiving SSI and/or SSDI benefits. Among all working age Iowans with disabilities, 18.27% were receiving benefits, of whom 2.17% of the total recipients were blind or visually impaired. Of the total recipients, 69.93% were working age individuals with disabilities, and 2.33% of working age disability recipients where individuals who were blind or visually impaired.

The working age individuals who are receiving disability benefits are the individuals who can
Iowa (IA) WIOA Matrix

most readily be described as those with the most significant disabilities and most likely to benefit from supported employment. Given SSA numbers, this means there are 35,824 working age individuals with disabilities in Iowa, of whom 836 are blind or visually impaired.

If the number of individuals considered most significantly disabled is expanded to include all blind or visually impaired individuals who are 64 or younger, the number increases to 1,042. This would include anyone under the age of 18. Data collection for age cohorts is projected to be modified for upcoming surveys to address changes in legislation regarding transition. (Page 406)

Title IV

VR Goal 3: All blind and visually impaired Iowans achieve the highest quality of employment outcome that is commensurate with their strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice.

Strategy 1: Provide a longer period for job stabilization before closure in cases where a client is working toward achieving more hours, and require additional documentation for cases closing in employment at less than twenty hours per week. Strategy 2: Ensure all clients receiving Social Security Disability Insurance and/or Supplemental Security Income have the opportunity to receive individualized benefits counseling from a certified Benefits Planner.

Measures: The following measures will be used to gauge progress toward the goal: • Percentage of Full-time Closures (32 Hours or more per week). • Average Hours Worked per Week at Closure. • Average Hourly Wages at Closure. • Percentage of SSI & SSDI beneficiaries receiving benefits planning services. Results:

In FY 2016, 58% of clients successfully closing their cases were working 32 or more hours per week. The average hours worked per week at the time of closure was approximately 32 hours. Average wage was $14.88 per hour. The following is data from FY 2015: Twenty-eight percent of clients who were SSI and SSDI beneficiaries received benefits counseling services. Twenty-six percent of clients worked less than 20 hours per week; of those, 64% reported more than one disability and 36% were individuals with the most significant disabilities. (Page 433)

Title IV

Employer/Business

Iowa will implement an accessible data collection effort that streamlines data collection processes, increases efficiency throughout the workforce delivery system, and aids in accurate performance measurement used in decision-making.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) requires core agencies to develop an integrated system that can be used as a common application for services across the workforce delivery system as well as a tool for common data reporting. OMB 1820-0508 outlines revisions to the RSA-911 State-Federal Program for Vocational Rehabilitation Case Service Record and OMB 1205-0NEW provides guidance related to data collection required by section 116(d) of the WIOA including 1) State Performance Report (data by entities that administer WIOA core programs, 2) Local Area Performance Report for Title I, Subtitle B programs, and Eligible Training Provider Performance Report for Title I programs. Although these new reporting
Iowa (IA) WIOA Matrix

requirements significantly expand the amount of data collection required by the agency, they also provide an opportunity for Iowa Workforce Development, Iowa Department of Education and Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services to move out of silos and identify ways the agencies can collaborate to provide a seamless electronic system to provide Iowa’s citizens access to information about services available to them through the core programs and the ability begin the application process from any electronic device connected to the internet—even from the comforts of their own homes. First, IVRS technology staff must assess our current data system and analyze its effectiveness is data collection, analysis, case management and reporting. (Page 152) Title I

When staff implement the job analysis process, potential solutions begin to emerge. For example, one business was using skilled laborers to make boxes. By hiring a separate person to make boxes, the business actually saved money since it was not a skilled position. Keeping skilled workers on the line doing production allowed the business to have less production loss and pay workers in accordance to their duties. Through hiring a person to make the boxes, an opportunity was created for a job candidate who did not have the skills to work on the line but wanted to work in advanced manufacturing. This is one of many examples that IVRS has used to create opportunities for job candidates. Additionally, these analyses are perfect ways to introduce our job candidates into the careers they may be considering, in order to help them make an informed choice.

The IVRS Business Consultant has been involved in training staff at many levels; including state, regional and national conferences and webinars. In-person trainings include Iowa Association of Providers conference and the Iowa APSE (Association of Persons Supporting Employment First) conference. National webinar trainings include: Disability Employment Initiative (DEI) on Reverse Job Fairs; Work-Based Learning webinar and Community-Business-School relationships sponsored by NTACT (National Transition Assistance Center on Transition); Cornell University’s Employer Engagement: Meeting Business Needs, Adding Value; and ODEP’s (Office of Disability Policy) webinar on Increasing Employer Engagement, in partnership with the IVRS administrator. This has increased visibility of Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation business engagement efforts and resulted in IVRS earning a reputation as a proactive and innovative partner. (Page 308) Title IV

Data Collection

The new RSA 911 Data Reporting Requirements have been added to the electronic case management system since the development of the last State Plan. There continues to be a need to improve understanding from all partners in the American Job Centers regarding issues such as common application, intake orientation for job seekers, as well as strategies for co-enrollment. Collaborative partnerships are occurring and the Workforce Center in Creston, Iowa serving the SW portion of the state was recognized in national WINTAC webinars for the joint service delivery efforts. IVRS staff were key partners in this effort.

WIOA provides IVRS and partners the opportunity to work collaboratively without duplicating services while expanding capacity to provide statewide services. Both IVRS and Workforce Centers are mandated to provide comprehensive services; however not everyone with a disability
Iowa (IA) WIOA Matrix

requires intensive services. IVRS provides guidance and technical assistance, which allows for a continuum of services based on each individual’s need. This continuum of service model propels “disability” into the community-wide experience requiring all organizations and entities to create systems that work to achieve outcomes for all individuals as a result. (Page 333) Title IV

An analysis of IVRS data show that rehabilitation rates dropped from 59.66 in FFY14 to 57.35 in FFY15 to 52.61 in FFY16. Part of this can be attributed to the Employment First philosophy that has been embraced and infused into the culture at IVRS.

EF opportunities are continuing to draw attention to Iowa and facilitate changes in our systems. Competitive integrated employment is the ultimate goal for all Iowans. Iowa’s efforts have been enhanced through the collaboration occurring between the Employment First Leadership Team, the Iowa Coalition for Integrated Employment/Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and the Disability Employment Initiative. In accordance with EF, Iowa is committed to strengthening employment services for people with disabilities, improving customer service, and breaking down artificial barriers. The adoption of EF has involved changes in both policy and service provision in Iowa. Specific focus was on changing the employment culture of Iowa with an emphasis on competitive integrated employment. Community Provider organizations participated in pilot efforts to transform their organizations to become high achieving employment providers.

Employment First generated a significant change in the way services were contracted for - or delivered in Iowa. IVRS wrote more employment plans to give an increased number of individuals an opportunity to reach employment. (Page 345) Title IV

IVRS funded Supported Employment Services (SES) for 877 individuals in FFY2016, using both Part B and Title VI Funds and Part B Title I funds. Approximately $240,942 Title VI funds were used on 162 individuals and a total of 877 individuals were provided Supported Employment Services in the amount of $1,521,901 with $1,280,959 from Title I funds. FFY2017 approximately $240,474 Title VI funds were used on 288 individuals and a total of 1,077 individuals were provided Supported Employment Services in the amount of $1,831,876 with $1,591,402 from Title I funds. It is anticipated that FFY2018 that approximately 300 individuals will receive SES using Title VI funds in the amount of $240,900 and a total of 1,100 individuals will be provided SES using Title I funds in the amount of $1,630,516. It is anticipated that FFY2019 that approximately 300 individuals will receive SES using Title VI funds in the amount of $240,900 and a total of 1,125 individuals will be provided SES using Title I funds in the amount of $1,672,625. If federal monies are allocated in a different reduced manner changing the SES funding formulas this will create additional stress on every day budgets. IVRS continues efforts to expand community partnerships and collaborative efforts continue to increase with Iowa’s renewed vigor in embracing the philosophy of Employment First. (Page 353) Title IV

GOAL 1: All of Iowa’s workforce will represent the continuum of a most advanced, diverse, skilled, and Future Ready workers in the nation.

Methods that will be used in the evaluation of progress include but are not limited to customer satisfaction data, quality assurance data, and performance on common performance measures.
**Iowa (IA) WIOA Matrix**

and key standards and indicators, and targeted outcomes and efficiencies. This information will continue to inform IVRS management about service delivery issues, performance patterns, and provide opportunities for improved data analysis.

The implementation of new service delivery strategies with our education partners involve pre-employment transition services as well as services for the potentially eligible. These services have enhanced outreach and influenced service delivery. Our collaborative partnership with Iowa Medicaid has aligned state funding and expanded service delivery. Our continued collaboration with Workforce partners has expanded services to all Iowans with IVRS focused on the supports for individuals with the most significant disabilities. (Page 355) Title IV

**511**

Section 511 of WIOA helps ensure students in special education have opportunities for the following: discover options of competitive integrated work that would be of interest; assessment and work experiences in the community; and employment services so a student is competitively employed or pursuing higher education or training by high school graduation. Services such as Discovery, Career Exploration, Work Readiness and Work Adjustment are examples of services that IVRS may arrange with community providers depending on a student’s needs. While coordination efforts are currently occurring, there continues to be a need for further discussions and education to steer schools’ focus from facility-based employment towards the Employment First philosophy. IVRS is tracking individuals who select to enter into segregated employment to ensure they receive the required career counseling and information and referral services. Protocols were developed and implemented by July 2016 to address this requirement for individuals earning sub-minimum wages. Collaboration Transition Protocol (CTP) is a process that was developed by IVRS, the Iowa Department of Education, and the Area Education Agencies (AEA), and implemented throughout Iowa. (Page 302) Title IV

Iowa VR has been the lead agency in the Employment First initiative and worked with many Iowa providers in receiving direct subject matter expertise for competitive integrated employment strategies. These efforts of provider transformation, along with monthly Community of Practice webinars, positively impact customized employment service delivery and have increased numbers of individuals with the most significant disabilities (MSD) accessing competitive integrated employment.

IVRS expanded partnerships with private vendors for specific employment services. In addition, IVRS executed a contract with the University of Iowa - Center for Disability and Development for employment services. CDD also completed their own statewide needs assessment in 2017 and we have had joint discussions regarding overlap of employment related issues. This has led to collaboration on a Kessler grant to support the use of technology in remote job coaching for select pilot sites. (Page 307) Title IV

IVRS acknowledges there exists a continued overreliance by community providers on sheltered services and sub-minimum wage placement as a long term placement, rather than a time limited
service designed to move a job candidate closer to community employment. IVRS recognizes that all people with disabilities can find meaningful work in the community beyond the simulated work of a workshop setting, and we will continue to lend our efforts in educating providers on the importance of competitive, integrated, community based goals for consumers as is required by Federal regulation. There are a growing number of provider organizations who have actively participated and taken leadership roles in provider transformation efforts to support competitive, integrated employment occurring in the community. Contributing to this effort was the service delivery of the Employment First efforts. (Page 338) Title IV

Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP). The Department’s Vocational Rehabilitation program administrator serves on the Special Education Advisory Panel, which discusses outcomes and policies related to students and youth in special education, including students in transition. The purpose of IDB involvement is to connect with schools and providers for transition, provide guidance on policy development and strategies for student outcomes, while also providing information that impacts the most significantly disabled students/youth as it pertains to Section 511 of WIOA. (Page 387) Title IV

Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination: Section 188

Additionally, key staff and WIOA work group implementers have participated in LEAD Center Webinars regarding serving persons with disabilities under WIOA and have infused the promising practices and policies throughout the vision and goals and the entirety of the Unified State Plan. The one-stop operations and system design group is developing effective policies, plans and procedures that will be incorporated into the One-Stop Center operations. In utilizing the reference guide as a foundation on which to design supportive policies, it is important to note that until such time as the Department of Labor announces new regulations pursuant to WIOA Section 188, the current Section 188 regulations cited herein are used. Section 188 regulatory requirements are organized into three Sections:

• Providing Universal Access to Programs and Activities

• Ensuring Equal Opportunity

• Obligation to Ensure Equal Opportunity for Individuals with Disabilities

• Implementing Universal Access and Equal Opportunity through the designation of a Qualified Equal Opportunity Officer. (Page 196) Title I

Throughout the course of the year a variety of professional development opportunities are available by and to each of the partners within the workforce delivery system and beginning in 2016, a formal team will be charged with ensuring that professional development practices are appropriate to the current needs of the workforce system beneficiaries, providers and employers. This team will also be developing guidelines for assessing program effectiveness, progress toward measurable goals and adherence to the Unified State Plan and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. well as any additional requirements resulting from WIOA. Training and staff development will be fundamental to the successful implementation of Iowa’s Unified State
Iowa (IA) WIOA Matrix

Plan. Per the statewide Memorandum of Understanding, the partners will collaborate to develop uniform One-Stop Certification criteria that reflect the following principles:

- One-Stop Centers will provide excellent customer service to job seekers, workers, and business.
- One-Stop Centers will reflect innovative and effective service design.
- One-Stop Centers will operate with integrated management systems.
- One-Stop Centers will operate with high-quality staffing.
- One-Stop Centers will increase physical and programmatic access to workforce services for individuals with barriers to employment, including but not limited to individuals with disabilities and individuals with LEP. (Page 239) Title I

Disability: The department ensures that providers will ensure equitable access to all AEFLA activities and facilities as detailed by the application process with specific state standards and reviewed annually. Each applicant pledges to serve participants, regardless of disability. The department will provide trainings to assist providers and staff strategies to ensure that all activities and published materials will be free of bias regarding disabilities. To further ensure that disabled individuals have equitable access to the program, all providers pledge to make any reasonable accommodation needed by disabled participants to ensure their full and equitable participation in AEFLA activities. In addition to this and in compliance with the GEPA and WIOA Section 188, the department in partnership with one-stop partners, where applicable, ensures that all entrances, restrooms, offices are accessible to individuals with disabilities in order to ensure their equal access in AEFLA activities.

Age: The department ensures that all participants of eligible age will be served and have equitable access to participate in all AEFLA activities based on need while ensuring that all programs and published materials will be free of bias regarding age. Additionally, the providers will offer age-appropriate activities and materials, including reading materials, for participants. (Page 290) Title I

Vets

The DVOP staff in Iowa has maintained an excellent working relationship with their local VA VR & E staff. The procedure followed in serving Chapter 31 Vets is in accordance with VA/DOL Technical Assistance Guide (TAG) dated December 2008.

Iowa has established the position of Intensive Services Coordinator (ISC) who is out stationed on a part-time basis at the VR&E Regional office. The position is filled by a DVOP specialist.

DVOPs receive referrals from the VR&E counselor through the ISC and are at that time informed of the Veteran’s employment goal, barriers to employment and any other significant information.
Iowa (IA) WIOA Matrix

Upon referral, the DVOP immediately conducts an interview to further assess the Veteran’s situation. The DVOP will develop a mutually agreed upon, individualized case management plan to assist the Veteran while in receipt of employment services.

The DVOP will provide resume assistance, interviewing techniques, job leads and establish job development referrals with employers. The DVOP will also make referrals to assist with any special needs the Veteran may have. The DVOP maintains a minimum of weekly contact with the Chapter 31 Veteran and each month submits the results of the month’s activities to the VR&E counselor and the ISC.

Iowa Workforce Development has partnered with the state DOL/ETA Office of Apprenticeship and hosts the following web site: http://www.iowaworkforce.org/apprenticeship/. This web site has been recognized as the premier Apprenticeship web portal in the nation. DVOP staff routinely use this site to place Veterans in training.

The Iowa Department of Education works closely with the DVOP Specialists to disseminate information on Chapter 31 GI Bill programs, the Troops to Teachers program and various other educational programs to provide educational opportunities for our Veterans. (Page 193) Title I

The Governor, with support of the Iowa Legislature, increased the state’s capacity to meet the rapidly evolving needs of employers through increased support to Registered Apprenticeship programs. In 2014, funding to support Registered Apprenticeship Programs was tripled. IWD recently received a grant to hire a Registered Apprenticeship Statewide Coordinator. IWD is contracting with the Department of Education to identify needs and gaps in the state’s Registered Apprenticeship programs and will be applying for the expansion grant to increase the state’s immediate and ongoing capacity to develop Registered Apprenticeship Programs. IWD will be working to build a model for Pre-Apprenticeships for out of school youth and for adults. IWD will be collaborating with IVRS in this process and looking at current successful IVRS programs which incorporate Registered Apprenticeships. Under WIOA, Registered Apprenticeship program sponsors that request to be Eligible Training Providers are automatically included on the list and will remain as long as the program is registered or until the program sponsor notifies the State that it no longer wants to be included on the list.

Registered Apprenticeship programs are not subject to the same application and performance information requirements or to a period of initial eligibility or initial eligibility procedures as other providers because they go through a detailed application and vetting procedure to become a registered apprenticeship program sponsor with the Department of Labor. These program sponsors must indicate their interest in being an Eligible Training Provider. Registered apprenticeship program sponsors will remain as long as the program is registered or until the program sponsor notifies Iowa Workforce Development that it no longer wants to be included on the list. The biennial review must also include verification of the registration status of registered apprenticeship programs. Within the state’s goals and throughout the plan and strategies there is a strong focus on RAP. (Page 224) Title I

3. The Employer Disability Resource Network (EDRN) — is a collaborative group of state, federal and private partners working together to identify, develop and mobilize resources,
### Iowa (IA) WIOA Matrix

Supports and services that add value to Iowa businesses hiring persons with disabilities. EDRN Partners include Iowa Vocational Rehabilitation Services; Iowa Department for the Blind; Deaf Services; Division of Persons with Disabilities; Veterans Administration; Social Security Administration; Iowa Workforce Development; U.S. Small Business Administration/SCORE; Goodwill Industries of Central Iowa. EDRN provides Iowa employers with access to qualified applicants, enhances the available labor market by combining on-the-job training, internships and classroom experiences for high-demand occupations, and serves as a resource for up-to-date information about disability employment issues for the business community. (Page 298) Title I

### Mental Health

The ICYD Council meets quarterly to receive reports from state agencies and the State of Iowa Youth Advisory Council (SIYAC), review progress of current activities, review data, and establish priorities and recommending actions on the many issues affecting youth. The prioritized goal of increasing graduation rate to 95% by 2020 was selected due to its high visibility and as a summative measure of youth development efforts, and the many cross-agency issues that contribute to youth graduating from high school (e.g. substance abuse, family, employment, teen pregnancy, and mental health). Each of the agencies represented on the Council has a role in achieving this goal and work to address these issues as individual agencies, and together as a team, to maximize efficiency in state government and make the best use of existing resources. (Page 133) Title I

2. Department of Human Services — This is a general agreement between DHS and IVRS, which allows and encourages interaction between the two agencies for individuals for whom both provide services. It relates to referrals, joint planning, office space, shared funding and related activities. An IVRS staff person is a required member of the Iowa Mental Health Planning Council, a group that represents a cross-section of constituencies and interest groups. Over 50% of its members must be consumers, family members, advocates, and others who are not state employees or providers. The duties of the Council are to advocate for adults with a serious mental illness and children with a serious emotional disorder and to monitor, review, and evaluate the allocation and adequacy of mental health services within the State. (Page 298) Title I

The IVRS attorney is currently on the Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council, and their Executive Director is assigned to the leadership team of Employment First, which is coordinated through IVRS. Both groups share a focus and belief that all individuals can be employed with the right services and supports, and that through progressive employment options, there is something for everyone.

3. THE STATE AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES.

IVRS and the Department of Human Services (DHS) that administers the title XIX program of the Social Security Act, and who has the primary state level responsibility for overseeing the mental health services in Iowa have entered into a Memorandum of Agreement. This MOA describes the financial responsibilities and the populations served to maximize resources and
## Iowa (IA) WIOA Matrix

Avoid duplication. Collaborative planning efforts occurred with DHS in the implementation of the Iowa Employment First principles that complement the vision of IVRS that “Employment is the first priority and preferred outcome of publically funded services for people with disabilities.”

IVRS is also represented on the Mental Health Planning Council and meets quarterly with this group to discuss service needs and gaps in Iowa, and review legislative initiatives. (Page 316) **Title IV**

The Iowa Department for the Blind is dedicated to assisting clients to achieve competitive integrated employment. The Department will continue to explore potential for cooperation and collaboration with the State Medicaid plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act. The Department collaborates to identify potential clients, coordinate service plans and share funding for those individuals with developmental disabilities in the System who are described as blind and visually impaired. Other mental health services are provided statewide by various entities. Department counselors cooperate with those providers to ensure that mutual clients, or persons who may need both VR and mental health services, are adequately and appropriately served. A Memorandum of Agreement with the Governance Group (eight state agencies which includes the State Medicaid/Mental Health Division and the Executive Director of the Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council) collaborated to support strategies to reduce duplication and maximize employment efforts with a clear focus on competitive, community integrated employment for individuals with the most significant disabilities. The Department of Human Services (DHS) that administers the title XIX program of the Social Security Act, and who has the primary state level responsibility for overseeing the mental health services in Iowa have entered into a Memorandum of Understanding. This MOU describes the financial responsibilities and the populations that are served to maximize resources and avoid duplication. (Page 395-396) **Title IV**

### RTW/SAW

One-Stop centers must engage Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants, to ensure maximum availability of employment and skill advancement services to help claimants return to work as quickly as possible. Staff will encourage and facilitate access for center customers to all appropriate career services at each and every center visit to continuously engage them in the service delivery process until employed in self-sufficient employment. Customers will have continued access to services until their career or employment goal is achieved.

The Partners recognize that the State’s workforce services must meet the needs of job seekers, workers, and businesses in order to help develop thriving communities where all citizens succeed and businesses prosper. A cornerstone of achieving this goal is to provide excellent customer service to job seekers. (Page 241) **Title I**

The SRC also recognized that individuals with disabilities who are 55 years of age or older have unique barriers to employment beyond their disability. It was recommended that IVRS develop a specific program for this population; subsequently IVRS entered into an agreement with the Department on Aging. As a result, IVRS Counselors are working in collaboration with Area
**Iowa (IA) WIOA Matrix**

Agency on Aging staff to provide enhanced employment services. Employment Specialists were hired to partner with the IVRS Counselor in identifying job goals, resources in communities, and businesses open to hiring older workers with knowledge of the needs for an aging population. When a disability has been experienced which creates a gap in work history and the individual is older, there are increased ways for discrimination to occur. Older workers have much to offer, but do need additional supports and training to prepare them for a return to work. This initiative allows for these supports. This is a unique Iowa collaborative effort to meet an identified need in our population. (Page 332) Title I

*All enclosed information is cited directly from final state plan as of June 30, 2019

Find your local state plans here:

https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osers/rsa/wioa/state-plans/index.html