



### **Board Chair's Message:**

On behalf of the Mountain Area Workforce Development Board we are pleased to submit the Mountain Area's 2008 – 2013 Strategic Plan for your review and information. We are excited about our plans for the upcoming years and believe the challenges facing the workforce development system are addressed by the goals and objectives outlined in the plan. We feel the workforce development system is uniquely positioned to continue to provide opportunities for our workforce and the employers in the community.

The JobLink Career Centers developed by the Workforce Development Board are widely available to residents seeking access to the variety of excellent employment and training opportunities being offered throughout the region. The need for a skilled workforce is imperative to the success of our region, state and nation. The Board welcomes the opportunity to support building the academic and occupational skills of our youth, adults and dislocated workers in the four county Mountain Local Area. We believe that individuals are taking advantage of the skill training and educational opportunities being made available to them throughout the workforce development system.

The Strategic Planning committee is to be commended for their time and effort in the development of the plan. The Committee Chairperson, William A. Mance, Jr. was dedicated to the successful completion of the plan and his leadership led to a product that the Board is pleased to present. Serving on the committee were the following Board members: William Ragland, Phil Webb, Kathryn McIntyre, Rick Elingburg, Bob Kendrick Tim Rhodes, Lorraine Poe, Jerry Plemmons, Matthew Wechtel, Paul Keating and Jeff McDaris.

Also we want to give special recognition to Phil Monk, staff to the committee for his time in planning, research and the development of the plan. Should you have any questions regarding the plan please do not hesitate to contact the Workforce Development Board staff at (828) 250-4760.

Sincerely,

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Mountain Area Workforce Development Board

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# MOUNTAIN AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

## Strategic Plan 2008 – 2013

### Overview:

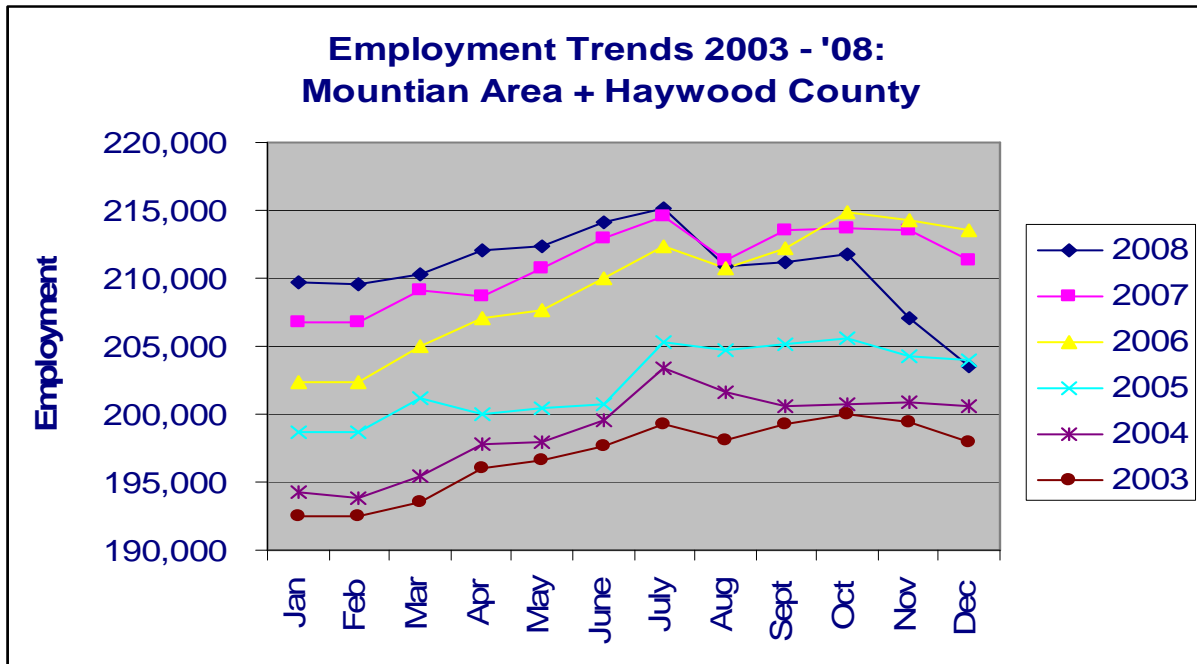
Over the last year the MAWDB has engaged in a rigorous examination of the relevant data and conducted in-depth discussions with the leading workforce and economic development organizations in the five county region. Consultations, joint meetings and a Regional Workforce Summit have been held with Southwestern Workforce Development Board. Extensive notes have been taken, reviewed and distilled into this strategic plan that seeks to maximize the impact of WIA resources and extend effectiveness of collaborative efforts to meet the skill development needs of the local workforce, and to address the business community's demand for qualified workers. Many of the goals contained in this plan do not rely solely on WIA funding or staff resources. This plan seeks to blend WIA efforts with the plans and investments made by partner organizations and seeks to acquire additional grant resources to achieve to desired objectives that are relevant to the Workforce Development Board's Mission.

This strategic plan also looks beyond the four county (Buncombe, Henderson, Madison & Transylvania) Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Local Area and attempts to examine the primary "labor shed" for the region. In this regard Haywood County emerges as the single greatest outside-the-region contributor of workers to the Mountain Area. In fact, Haywood County has more workers commuting into the Mountain Area (4,535) than all the region's other neighboring counties combined (4,387) - *see Table 1*. While nearly 9,000 workers in the four county region reside in bordering counties, those workers account for only 5.5% (8,922 /161,230) of the Mountain Area's employment. Of the employed residents in the four Mountain Area counties, 95.4% are working within the Mountain Area.

Until the recent sharp economic decline, the prevailing workforce trend in the Mountain Area Workforce Development Board region has consistently been a general labor force shortage and, more critically, a shortage of skilled labor. Unemployment rates in the region have consistently been below the state and national averages. In the five county region (the Mountain Area counties plus Haywood) between 2002 and 2007 an additional 13,855 people entered the local labor force. During the same time an additional 17,147 people got jobs. The region's labor force growth rate (6.8%) and rate of increase in employment (8.8%) both trailed the State's growth rates (labor force 7.3% and employment 9.6%) – *see Table 2*.

However, the employment data for the last quarter of 2008 represents a substantial exaggeration of recurring regional employment patterns. By examining labor force and employment data from 2003 – 2008 for the October – December quarter we characteristically see considerable declines in employment and labor force participation. Over the five year period (excluding 2008) the Mountain Area Region experiences an average loss of 1,128 jobs during the fourth quarter. In 2008 the job losses totaled nearly 6,400.

The first quarter of 2009 has continued the rapid loss of jobs in the local economy. Although statistical data by industry sector is not yet available for 2009, manufacturing layoffs are accelerating, especially in the automotive sector. With the exception of healthcare and educational services all other sectors appear to be stagnant or declining. Historically the first quarter has produced mixed results with average job loses of nearly 2,600 jobs in January and another 300 in February, but the average job gain in March has been nearly 1,600 jobs.



Seasonal improvements are expected for the second quarter of 2009 in the leisure & hospitality sector and perhaps in the administrative and waste services sectors. The Federal Stimulus funds are offering opportunities to increase workforce development efforts, but the specifics are still emerging. What appears certain are:

- funds will be available for summer youth employment opportunities
- additional funds will be available for adult and dislocated worker training
- some emphasis will be placed on using additional WIA funds for supportive services (transportation and other types of assistance that are not available through other sources);
- unemployment compensation extensions, additional COBRA support and Pell Grant expansions will help those in WIA funded training programs support themselves during longer term training programs.

However, even given the recent economic downturn, the rate of unemployment in the Mountain Area is still nearly two percentage points below the State rate (January 2009 – Mtn. Area = 8.75%; NC = 10.6%). Source: <http://eslmi40.esc.state.nc.us/ThematicLAUS/clfasp/startCLFSAAY.asp>

The broad scope of the current economic recession is causing serious concern about the ability of the social safety net to assist dislocated workers with their mounting problems and employment needs. Closer partnerships with social service agencies and expanding short term training opportunities and job seeking skills workshop offerings are the quickest approaches to assisting

job seekers with their immediate concerns. Naturally, examining skill sets and identifying opportunities for transitions into available jobs is an important service for many clients. Other short term essential skills courses like “Basic Computer Skills for Job Seekers” and “Personal Financial Management during Difficult Times” are also helpful in making adjustments. Finally, those with the resources to manage longer term investments in a career change can take advantage of WIA’s extensive career assessments, counseling and training opportunities.

Although at this point the region’s future is inexorably linked to a floundering national and global economic circumstance, the purpose of local workforce development efforts remain unchanged. We must strive to help workers at all levels improve their skills so that they might advance their family and personal prosperity. We must help provide businesses with the talent they need to compete and succeed in very difficult economic times.

## **Youth Program Goals, Objectives and Tactics**

### **Introduction**

The success of youth in acquiring the basic skills necessary to learn technical skills and to succeed in the competitive labor market is fundamental to their ability to survive and prosper. Employers have repeatedly expressed their desire to find qualified youth who can learn jobs quickly and contribute vitality to their operations. Dropout prevention and recovery programs are essential elements in the efforts to develop a qualified and prosperous workforce for the region.

Based on the concerns expressed by employers at the Regional Workforce Summit and by the school superintendents at the Board Standards & Strategic Planning Committee meetings, it is abundantly apparent that work based learning strategies are considered to be a primary tool in reducing the region's dropout rate. Both the business community and the public schools are very interested in workable ideas for increasing business involvement with students.

The MAWDB has some very successful programs operating in the region that seek to address the high school dropout issue (see Attachment A).

Committee meetings with school superintendents and administrators revealed several consistent themes:

- Earlier (before age 16) involvement of at-risk students in "hands-on" and "work based" learning opportunities will help build their interest in education. Career and Technical Education is a critical component in reducing drop-out rates.
- Helping students develop clear career interests and goals, that they understand and that they believe are accessible to them, helps make completing their education more relevant. Local business involvement in the schools encourages students to take the school work more seriously and to think more deeply about the importance of learning.
- Summer activities that keep students connected with a work-based learning environment will increase the probability that they will realize the value of earning a diploma and enhance their interest in returning to school in the fall.

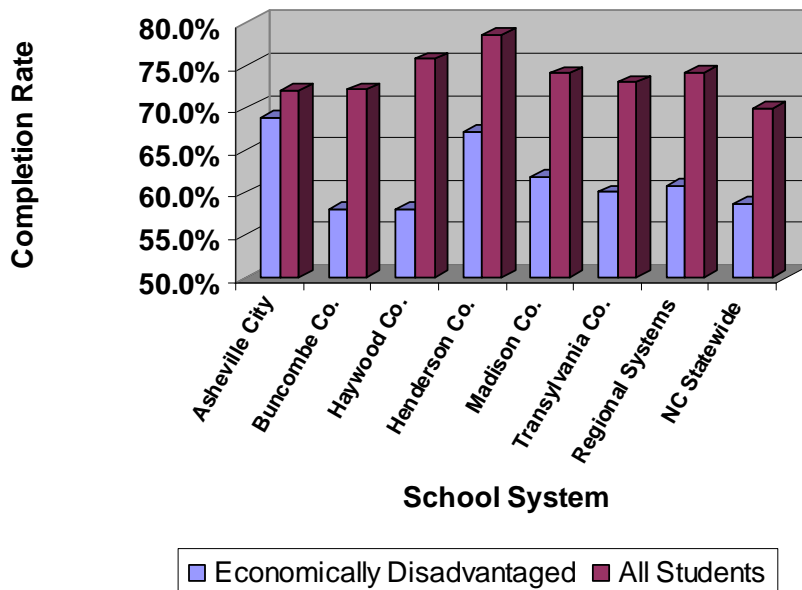
**Strategic Goal #1: Work with public schools and workforce partners to significantly increase the region's high school graduation rates as measured by the Five Year Cohort Graduation Rate.**

**Objective #1 – Increase the average Five Year Cohort Graduation Rate for the five county region to 85% or higher by 2013.**

### **Data**

Given the expected increases in core academic requirements for graduation and the WIA regulations requiring services to economically disadvantaged youth, who tend to dropout at higher rates than youth from more prosperous families, the MAWDB dropout prevention and recovery efforts will focus on the Five Year Cohort Graduation Rate. Focusing on the five year graduation time frame encourages WIA Counselors to work with students on credit recovery options and eases the defeating effects of set backs and obstacles the students encounter.

### Comparison of 2004-05 4 Year Cohort Completion Rates for Economically Disadvantaged Students and All Students by School System



Source: <http://ayp.ncpublicschools.org/2008/app/cgrdisag/>

The regional Five Year Cohort Graduation Rate for students entering their freshman year in 2003 and graduating in 2008 was 80.1% (3,290 graduates out of 4,107 freshmen entering school in 2003 - *see Table 3*). The 2008 freshman class for the region totals 5,180 students. A regional 5 Year Cohort Graduation Rate of 85% would mean that 4,403 students from this class would graduate by 2013. If one applies the region's 2003-2008 5YCGR (80.1%) then 4,149 of the 2008-13 students would graduate. The difference is 254 students. Currently, none of the region's counties 5YCGR's reach the 85% level, but 5 schools match or surpass that level: Pisgah (86%), Hendersonville (93%), West Henderson (87%), Brevard (88%) & Rosman (85%).

Among all of the alternative schools in the five county region the 5YCGR was 48.2% for the 2003-08 cohort. Although, Buncombe Co. Middle College had a dramatically higher rate (90%, 9 graduates of 11 enrollees) than the other alternative schools, an ambitious goal for the regional average among alternative schools would be a 60% 5YCGR rate.

#### **Strategies and Resources**

As referenced above (see Attachment A) the Mountain Area Workforce Development Board is already investing considerable resources on WIA In-School and Out-of-School Youth programs that are designed to assist with dropout prevention and dropout recovery among economically disadvantaged youth. In 2008-09 the MAWDB has budgeted:

- \$146,194 to provide in-school career, personal development and life/coping skills counseling and credit recovery assistance for 75 students in two county school systems
- \$84,724 to assist 28 students with counseling and computer assisted instruction for credit recovery at the non-alternative school that has the lowest 4 & 5YCGR in the region, and

- \$54,721 to re-enroll 26 dropouts in an alternative school and provide them with career/supportive service counseling and a modest amount of school related work experience/income.

Committee discussions with the Superintendents of the region's school systems revealed a consistent interest in using career counseling, work based learning and Career & Technical Education courses as a means of encouraging student to stay in school.

**Tactic #1: Increase the levels of service and effectiveness of the WIA In-School dropout prevention and Out-of-School dropout recovery programs.**

The WIA In-School and Out-of-School youth programs can facilitate a process by which assessments and multiple sources of career information can be used to help students identify a career orientation well before they turn age 16. The individual's career orientation can form the basis of work based learning activities that become increasingly involved and challenging as the student progresses through school (job shadowing, work experience, summer jobs, internships and apprenticeships). The WIA youth counselors will work with the schools' Career Development Coordinators and Career and Technical Education (CTE) Instructors to develop these work-based learning opportunities that fit with their WIA participants' career development orientation/goals.

Youth counselors should also emphasize other benefits, in addition to potential "earning & learning" opportunities, that participating in this career planning and development process/program can provide. Career development activities can be linked to completing the Senior Project and to potential scholarship support (through apprenticeship employers, WIA, Pell Grants or other sources) for continuing career pursuits in the region's community colleges.

To the extent that the local area's WIA youth counselors can effectively assist clients with establishing career goals and developing relevant work based learning opportunities, we can better serve our clients and assist the schools in increasing the 4 and 5 Year Cohort Graduation Rates. This can be accomplished (in part) by providing additional staff training for WIA Youth Counselors on establishing work-based learning opportunities and by tracking the number of career related and general work-based learning opportunities that the youth counselors develop for their clients.

The MAWDB will seek to maintain and, funds permitting, possibly extend these investments. Further, that MAWDB will strive to find other sources of support to supplement these efforts. Youth counselors will be encouraged to continue their emphasis on helping students overcome obstacles that threaten their academic progress and to help develop work-based learning experiences that will encourage the student to stay in school and graduate.

**Tactic #2: Emphasizing Apprenticeship/Internship opportunities as a means for students who are not pursuing a four year college program to enhance their skill development and earnings potential.**

When one looks at the data for students not graduating with their four year cohort (about 22% – 23% - *see Table 3*) and the percentage not taking the SAT (40% in 2007 – 45% in 2008), *see Table 4*) one can surmise that at least half of the region’s high school students are not planning to pursue a four-year college degree after graduation<sup>1</sup>.

Promoting apprenticeships and internships as a desirable alternative to the pursuit of a four year degree will offer an alternative pathway to success for students who are not excited about spending another four years in the classroom. Developing apprenticeship/work-based learning teams at each of the region’s high schools is a promising approach to expanding the numbers of youth who stay in school and simultaneously begin developing the skills for high paying careers.

The development of such teams has already begun in both Henderson and Buncombe Counties. These teams are comprised of the regional NC Department of Labor Apprenticeship Consultant, the WIA Business Services Representative, the appropriate community college representatives; the school system’s Career and Technical Education Coordinator, and the high school’s Career and Technical Education Instructors and Career Development Coordinators. These teams make extensive contacts with businesses in close proximity to the schools who offer technically skilled, high paying jobs. Community College instructors and/or department heads join the team based on the technical skill areas that are being targeted by the high school’s CTE faculty and principal. The team’s objective is to secure employer involvement in providing work based learning activities, especially apprenticeships, for students. The high school instructors, counselors and coordinators will then recruit students for these opportunities and encourage students to increase their academic performance so that they can participate in these ‘earn and learn” career development opportunities.

The measure of success will be the number of Apprenticeship/Work Based Learning agreements or relationships that are developed between businesses and schools in the local area. While these efforts will require little or no additional resources, the endorsement of the schools and some staff training will be essential to the success of these efforts.

**Tactic #3: Work with the Community Colleges and the Partners in Education Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to institute a series of summer programs to keep at-risk students involved in educational and career development activities.**

Another concern expressed by the superintendents related to reducing the dropout rate focused on “bridge” programs that would keep potential dropouts engaged in structured learning systems during the summer months. These activities cannot be traditional classroom style learning experiences and must include hands-on “earn & learn” components.

Several models containing elements of a summer “bridge” program exist around the region. Asheville City Government sponsors a summer program entitled City of Asheville Youth Leadership Academy (CAYLA). While CAYLA has been modeled on the traditional summer youth work experience program with students working in subsidized public agency jobs, with

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<sup>1</sup> Of course an undetermined percentage of youth will pursue a four year degree through the community college transfer program. Although enrollments in community college transfer programs are known, the percentage of those enrollments that are recent high school graduates who did or did not take the SAT is not available.

some soft skills training, the program is emerging into one that places stronger emphasis on personal growth and life skills development.

The Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce's Partners in Education (PIE) Committee has been working on the development of a one week Manufacturing Summer Institute in response to the employer concerns expressed at the Regional Workforce Development Summit. This program would involve rising freshmen (ages 14 & 15) in hands-on career exploration activities at A-B Tech. Youth would be introduced to welding, assembly machining, personal financial management, soft skills and work ethics, and career information.

To serve older youth (ages 16 – 18) with a summer bridge program, we must find career related employment experience opportunities and earnings to increase interest in participation. Such a program must include a blend of paid work experience or part-time employment, career exploration activities, critical work skills instruction and evaluation, personal growth and life skills activities. This program would utilize the community college facilities and equipment to expose students to a variety of career fields (healthcare, information technologies, manufacturing, mechanical trades, construction, etc.) and to emphasize the importance of successfully completing high school. Employers would provide instruction on effective work attitudes and habits, interpersonal communications, problem solving and decision making and local community based organizations would provide instruction about personal financial management.

For the Mountain Area WIA Youth program this summer bridge program could be particularly beneficial to the students in the Clyde A. Erwin High School computer assisted credit recovery program. Clyde A. Erwin High School has the lowest 4 and 5 Year Cohort Graduation Rates and the lowest SAT scores of all the High Schools in the region (see Tables 3 & 4). In Henderson County the WIA Youth participants at Balfour Education Center could greatly benefit from such a program. Students could be further enticed to participate with opportunities to receive WIA support for continuing their career pursuits after graduation. Upon successful implementation, this program could be extended to Transylvania and Madison Counties.

Support for work experience wages will be a difficult barrier to the success of this effort. While the 2009 – 2010 Stimulus Package can provide these wages for the summer of 2009, other sources of funds will probably be necessary for future summer opportunities. WIA funds are very limited and local governments are facing declining revenues. Minimum wage increases (\$7.25 per hour – 7/24/09) will further decrease the numbers of clients and/or hours that WIA and other funding sources can support. Typically, grants will not fund wages for the persons being served. Insurance considerations and participant transportation issues make placing students under age 18 in part-time positions in the private sector problematic as well.

This summer bridge approach to achieving a meaningful increase in the region's 4 and 5 year cohort graduation rates is so important that we will include this as a strategic tactic even though the prospects for success seem limited. Since this strategic plan is projecting activities through 2013, we will continue to explore options for implementing this summer bridge program.

Measures of the success of the program will be participation levels among at-risk students and the 5 Year Cohort Graduation Rates among participants.

**Strategic Goal #2: WIA Out-of-School Youth – Working with Community College partners to improve retention rates among youth pursuing one and two year courses of study.**

A relatively small portion of the Local Area’s youth funding has been used for post high school/GED technical skills training. The primary problem has been that the extremely low income levels required for youth WIA eligibility have severely limited the number of youth who can be enrolled in WIA post secondary technical skills training programs. Given the recent dramatic increases in layoffs and applications for food assistance, the numbers of eligible youth should rise considerably over the next several months.

Much of the successful recruitment of out-of-school youth has come from offering incentive bonuses to potential participants when they are applying to enter the community colleges’ GED programs. Currently the MAWDB offers a one-time bonus to students who are WIA eligible, enroll in the program and complete their GED. Upon completion of the GED we assist the youth in finding work or offer them support (paid tuition and books) to continue with career skills training in community college technical skills courses.

**Tactic #1: Establish a sequence of “performance awards” that reward incremental achievements based on (1) returning to school and earning a diploma, or earning a GED, (2) the successful completion a 12 credit hours in a MAWDB approved, community college curriculum course of study, and (3) three months of successful performance in a NC DOL approved apprenticeship.**

When recruiting Out-of-School Youth for WIA participation MAWDB staff will offer a sequence of performance awards that will encourage participants to look beyond returning to school and earning a diploma or completing the GED. Dropouts who enroll in the WIA Out-of-School Youth Program will earn a \$150 performance award if they return to school and earn a diploma or successfully complete a GED. Further, an additional performance award will be offered to encourage enrollment in and completion of at least 12 credit hours in a community college curriculum course in a MAWDB approved, high demand occupation. In addition to receiving paid books and tuition WIA enrollees who complete 12 credit hours or more (within one academic year) with a 2.0 average or better will receive a \$150 bonus payment. Further, if the participant enters an approved NC DOL apprenticeship program the MAWDB will provide an additional \$150 bonus payment after three (3) months of successful progress.

Entering an apprenticeship program helps link the student to an “earn and learn” opportunity that will enhance the participants’ chances of completing their technical skills training programs and will contribute to their opportunities to earn higher wages sooner. This process may require that the Board policy support payment of tuition over a longer period since most apprenticeship participants will be working full-time and attending school part-time. In some cases the employers will pay or reimburse the apprentices for their educational expenses. If employer

support is provided, then WIA funding for that individual can be terminated and used to support additional WIA participants.

If in the opinion of the Program Operators or school officials, this policy acts as an encouragement for youth to dropout so that they can gain access to the “performance awards” payments, the performance awards for earning a diploma or GED will be modified or discontinued.

**Tactic #2: Focus on developing part-time work/part-time educational opportunities for WIA participants – actively solicit part-time and flex-time job listings in the JobLink Career Centers.**

Focusing on securing job listings for part-time and flex-time positions can assist WIA participants in numerous ways and potentially help clients successfully complete their educational endeavors. JobLink Centers will actively pursue the listings of part-time job opportunities. This may involve an active media campaign and will certainly involve contacting businesses with which we have established relationships to encourage them to list part-time job opportunities with the JobLinks.

Part-time employment can be a valuable component in income maintenance during the WIA career development process. Part-time jobs are particularly important to youth, older workers, parents with infants and school age dependents and adult/dislocated worker students whose unemployment benefits are about to expire. Part-time job openings will be posted on the MAWDB website as part of the recruitment, screening and referral process to fill those openings.

Measures of success will be the numbers of part-time jobs listings secured and the number of WIA participants using the jobs to sustain their participation and completing their coursework.

## **Adult & Dislocated Worker Programs Goals, Objectives and Tactics**

### **Introduction**

Since October 2008 layoffs in the five county region have been far more numerous and widespread than has been experienced in several decades. While recent data compiling the displacement of workers by industrial categories is not yet available, strong anecdotal evidence points to more dramatic layoffs in automotive related manufacturing, housing related products manufacturing, smaller restaurants and retailers. Real Estate and construction layoffs primarily occurred earlier in 2008. During this time hiring and job postings have been primarily in the Healthcare sector.

The MAWDB will continue to provide eligible adults and dislocated workers its traditional array of services that range from job search assistance to paying for books and tuition (for up to two years of community college coursework) that will enable adult and dislocated workers to make career transitions.

The MAWDB will also use On-the-Job Training contracts to assist eligible adult and dislocated workers in making a career change more quickly while continuing to earn an income. In a broadly declining labor market finding OJT opportunities may prove difficult. On-the-Job Training contracts cannot be written to train new hires for positions in companies that currently have workers on lay-off.

### **Strategic Goal #1: Focus on individualized short-term training strategies that fill skill deficits or build skills for a career advancement and/or a competitive advantage in the labor market.**

Workers with dependents to support and those who have a sense of urgency to return to gainful employment are frequently better served by designing a personalized career development strategy that allows them the flexibility of returning to work as soon as an opportunity arises. This approach also focuses on “patching holes “ in the individual’s skill set and/or “adding on” or “upgrading” skills that will offer a competitive advantage for securing employment. This approach requires that counselors spend more time discussing each client’s skill set and the types of training that are appropriate for advancing each client’s career. With the clients assistance, a plan is developed that largely focuses on specific short-term continuing education, on-line or basic skills classes, that are offered on a schedule that permits the client to conduct a vigorous job search and accept employment on short notice without discontinuing his/her educational pursuits.

An example of this approach might be a material handler in a manufacturing plant whose job is to take production parts and supplies from inventory to processing sites along the production line and to take finished products to the packaging and shipping unit. Perhaps this person’s opportunities to advance within his/her former employer’s company, or to obtain a better paying job in another company, are dependent on developing computer skills and understanding the basics of supply chain management, or principles of quality control. The individual’s personalized career development plan might include:

- Computer Basics for the Workplace (free, 36 hrs);
- Computer Empowerment of the Workplace (free, 36 hrs.);

- Six Sigma Fundamentals (continuing education fee, 24 hrs, online);
- Six Sigma Applications (continuing education fee, 24 hrs, online); and/or
- APICS: Basics of Supply Chain Management (membership fee + registration, 30 hrs + certification exam)

Total 150 hours of training, approximate cost \$500.

This approach offers low cost skill development, resume enhancements and the potential to secure an advanced position in the client's career field.

Certification courses and short term courses that offer skill updates and advancement are available for numerous career fields (financial sector jobs, mechanical specializations, construction and skilled trades; legal specializations; information technologies; medical office and technology specialties; etc).

**Tactic #1: Focusing on short term skills training programs that will help workers in the older age groups and females with child rearing responsibilities update skills and be more successful in the labor market.**

In many cases older workers, especially those who spent careers in traditional manufacturing jobs, have substantial skill deficits that restrict their ability to successfully meet the requirements of good paying job opportunities available in the area. Recently the MAWDB and community colleges successfully completed the design and implementation of the Fundamentals for Advanced Manufacturing (FAM) course. This 42 hour course helps dislocated workers from traditional manufacturing jobs and those wanting to transition to the higher wages available in manufacturing careers prepare for, and gain access to, entry level advanced manufacturing employment opportunities. Although the FAM course is producing excellent results by introducing entry level manufacturing applicants to the technical and critical work skills necessary to successfully gain entry into manufacturing jobs, manufacturing employers continue to emphasize the need for applicants and employees to strengthen their critical work skills and work ethics. Rather than appending additional instructional segments to the FAM course, we believe that a separate short course offers a variety of advantages.

An in-depth interpersonal skills, communications and work ethics course can provide more meaningful impact on personal behaviors and prepare individuals for employment in a variety of occupational fields. As with the FAM course, content would be developed based on the involvement and input of employers who would actually hire the course completers. Individual assessments like the Myers-Briggs; the WorkKeys Teamwork, Performance, Talent and Fit could form the foundation of the customized course by helping clients take an objective look at their strengths and weaknesses in working with others. Problem solving, decision making, ethical behaviors, customer relations, conflict resolution, dealing effectively with criticism, maintaining a positive attitude and packaging yourself for success are a few of the topics that could be included in the curriculum. Also, as with the FAM course, students would be expected to use the WIN tutorials and complete the NC Career Readiness Certificate. This course would not only be a useful supplement to the FAM course, it would better prepare workers for entry level employment in the other major sectors of the region's economy: healthcare, hospitality and tourism, retail and professional business services.

Another short-term course that could offer improved skills for attaining entry level employment is an introduction to the essential knowledge of working in the information age. A customized introduction to basic computer skills is essential to successful job seeking and acquisition in today's economy. An ever increasing number of the best jobs available only accept on-line applications. Recent Incumbent Workforce Development Program grant applications have proposed teaching manufacturing employees basic computer skills (Thermo Fisher and Alcan Marshall). A customized computer basics training course would include: fundamentals of keyboarding, navigation and software applications; using the internet for job search and completing employment applications; email and basic word processing, introduction to excel, etc.

Over the past few years, several large call center operations have decided not to locate in the area because of a perception that there is an insufficient labor pool from which to draw. Existing call centers are adjusting their work schedules, increasing their wages and, in some cases, offering work-at-home opportunities. These job opportunities are ideally suited for older workers and stay-at-home parents. The essential skills for working in a call center include basic computer skills and strong interpersonal and communications skills.

The measures of success are the successful development of these short-term customized classes and the numbers of people enrolling in the classes, successfully completing the classes and entering employment opportunities that involve skills learned in the classes.

**Tactic #2: Use the WIN Online Tutorial System, WorkKeys Profiles and Assessments, O'Net and the NC Career Readiness Certificates as a means of preparing clients for and securing job opportunities**

In some cases skill deficits involve basic skills. Often adults and older workers are unwilling to participate in adult basic education classes or are intimidated by the length of time necessary to earn GED or adult high school credentials. In other cases they may simply need to spend some time refreshing their knowledge of educational skills applicable to existing job opportunities in the local economy. In either of these situations, the WIN Tutorial System is of great value to the older client and to clients who need to improve their basic skills while at home or during hours when classes are not easily accessible.

The WorkKeys Occupational Profiles Dictionary clearly shows the foundational skill levels that are necessary for a person to rapidly learn the technical content of a particular occupation. These profile summaries also provide clear attainment goals for clients to reach in specific skill areas. The O'Net job descriptions and career information also give clients a clearer understanding of the technical skill requirements and how the foundational skills are related to the technical aspects of performing the job.

In addition to learning the foundational skills associated with the requirements of a specific occupations, clients can use the WorkKeys based NC Career Readiness Certificate as a credential to prove to prospective employers that they currently have the levels of competence to learn the job they are seeking. This may be useful in dispelling subtle stereotype-based assumptions about older workers having difficulty leaning new skills.

The measures of success related to engaging clients in the WIN/WorkKeys/CRC are easily discernable through the WIN and CRC tracking systems.

**Strategic Goal #2: Recreate the Empowering Professionals in Career Search (EPICS) Program that actively assists Professionals and Older Workers in securing employment.**

Many retired residents are finding the value of their investments dwindling and are re-entering the labor force to maintain their standard of living. As discussed above, the practice of laying-off higher paid workers in times of declining company profits usually has a disproportionate affect on experienced older workers. Similarly, experienced workers are sometimes not hired because companies are uncomfortable hiring someone at a lower wage than they previously earned. Companies' fear that individuals taking a cut in pay will be constantly looking for better paying opportunities. For Program Year 2007-08 JobLink/ESC MIS data shows that 22.8% (5,815) of the MAWDB clients were age 50+ (see Table 6).<sup>2</sup>

Several years ago the Employment Security Commission in Asheville hosted a voluntary association of unemployed professionals (Empowering Professionals in Career Search - EPICS) who met weekly to discuss job opportunities in the community. The group also worked together to improve resumes and share job search ideas and tips on successful interviewing techniques. The group was led by an ESC employee who assisted the group with organizational tasks and job search information. This model, along with some improvements, seems well suited for serving the increasing numbers of professionals and older workers who are being adversely affected by the economic circumstances.

There are no specific services targeted toward older workers other than the Senior Community Service Employment Program, which offers minimum wage, part-time subsidized employment. Helping these job seekers into appropriate training and employment positions within the local labor market can help older individuals maintain or improve their economic circumstances.

A part-time coordinator could conduct skill needs assessments and assist the older clients in securing appropriate training opportunities. The coordinator could also be responsible for developing a loosely structured association of clients to network job opportunities and develop activities that would be beneficial to the group (e.g., employer presentations, entrepreneurship workshops, crisis financial management workshops, etc.). The coordinator could also be responsible for marketing and recruitment, explaining short term training options and the NC Career Readiness Certificate and its usefulness as an addition to one's resume, etc. For many older workers seeking career transitions, OJT contracts may prove useful.

Demonstration funding from within the WIA system or grant funding in coordination with interested workforce partners will be sought to initiate this program.

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<sup>2</sup> Older workers are generally considered to be age 55+ but the JobLink MIS Customer Characteristics reports break age grouping down as 50- 59 and 60-69 and 70+.

Measures of success would be increased numbers of older clients and professionals being served through the JobLinks, rates of participation in training courses and WIN/WorkKeys/CRC, rates of post program employment.

**Strategic Goal #3: Develop better methods for gathering JobLink and WIA customer feedback on the types and quality of service provided.**

At this time we have very limited means for evaluating the effectiveness of our services to JobLink Customers. The JobLink MIS offers no outcome information related to client services. We have discussed the possibility of obtaining aggregated employment information on JobLink Customers from the ESC Unemployment Insurance Wage Database. While this is possible, the details of collecting the information and making sure it meets our needs have yet to be resolved. At minimum we need to begin the systematic collection, analysis and reporting of data on the following topics:

- How many of the JobLink customers entered employment within three or six months after registering with JobLink?
  - o ESC-LMI Customized UI Wage Report
- For those JobLink Customers who gained employment, what industry sectors hired them and what were the wage rates at which they were hired.
  - o ESC-LMI Customized UI Wage Report
- Did clients receive the services they wanted or needed? If so, how effective were these services in helping them achieve their goals?
  - o Customized monthly email/mail-out survey to randomly selected sample of registrants (with deadline for responses and one reminder sent to respondents)
- Do clients need other services that are not offered at the JobLink? If so, what other services should the JobLink offer?
  - o Customized monthly email/mail-out survey to randomly selected sample of registrants (deadline and reminder)
- How many people are referred to JobLink job listings? (Are clients who are referred for job listings screened in accordance with employer specified criteria for referral?)
  - o Listings kept on spreadsheets at the front desk.
- Are employers who list jobs with the JobLinks satisfied with number and quality of the referrals that have been made?
  - o Customized monthly survey of businesses who list jobs (include the listing of persons referred for their job).

The data from these evaluation resources would be reported to the Board twice annually once the system for collecting the data is developed and implemented.

## **Economic Development and Business Services**

### **Overview**

Currently the Mountain Area Workforce Development Board has several initiatives that are focused on economic development and business services.

- In cooperation with AdvantageWest and four other WIA Local Areas the Mountain Area has invested in two regional workforce surveys of employers and job seekers that provide insights into hiring needs and job seeker employment interests.
- The Mountain Area Business Services Coordinator is a member of the Advocates for Industry group hosted by the Asheville Chamber of Commerce's Economic Development Division. In addition to the Chamber and Workforce Development Board, this group includes representatives from A-B Tech, ESC, NC Department of Commerce and NC State University's Industrial Extension Service. The Advocates seek to coordinate economic development and workforce development services for local businesses.
- In coordination with the community colleges the JobLinks in the Mountain Area are recruiting job seekers for customized short term training programs that were designed to improve the skills of entry level applicants for advanced manufacturing jobs. The Fundamentals for Advanced Manufacturing certificate program and the Principles of Machining class have been very successful in increasing the supply of skilled workers for high demand, entry level manufacturing jobs.
- Companies are continuing to utilize the Incumbent Workforce Development Program training grants very effectively for improving the skills of their existing workers and for improving the productivity and competitiveness of local businesses.
- The Mountain Area and Henderson County JobLinks continue to perform WorkKeys and related assessments for employers who are striving to select skilled applicants for important entry level positions.
- The Economic Developers from each of the five counties and the City of Asheville shared their plans with the MAWDB Strategic Planning Committee as part of the information gathering process.

### **Data**

Aggregated job growth data by industry projects Healthcare (+5,191 jobs); Administrative and Waste Services (+3,449); Construction (+3,421) and Real Estate, Rental & Leasing (+3,251) as the strongest sectors for the five county region between 2008 and 2013. Recent economic trends have put much of that expected job growth in jeopardy. Manufacturing is expected to decline by 450 jobs (-2%) over the five year span. In this case the data accurately reflects the continuation of recent growth trends, but does not account for other important considerations such as wage rates, subsector areas of growth and the factor of occupational demand that is not fulfilled and therefore not reflected in employment growth.

## **Healthcare**

The Healthcare Industry will probably continue to be the primary sector for employment growth for the next 5+ years. The Mountain Area Workforce Development Board is working with AdvantageWest on the Allied Health Sector Initiative to develop and implement an action plan that involves new levels of collaboration among workforce development, economic development and Allied Health businesses.

### **Goals:**

The action plan goals that were recently developed include the:

- **Establishment of an Ad-Hoc Committee for Policy Issues;**
- **Organization of a formal Regional Consortium of Allied Healthcare Providers and Educators;**
- **Development of a Marketing and Public Relations Plan;**
- **Conducting an Analysis of the Home Healthcare Industry;**
- **Identifying and disseminating an existing Career Ladder Plan for entry level Allied Healthcare Workers**

The success of the Allied Health Sector Initiative will be measured by the following outcomes:

- Changes to policies that negatively affect the Allied Healthcare Industry
- Increase in the number of skilled Allied Healthcare Workers in the region
- Improved image of the Allied Healthcare Industry
- Increased collaboration between providers, educators, and workforce development professionals
- Market the goals of the Allied Health Plan through the Regional Partnerships established under the grant

## **Advanced Manufacturing**

Three of the region's counties economic development plans still place a heavy emphasis on the growth of manufacturing. While manufacturing remains an important concern in Madison County the economic development priorities are tilted toward agriculture, hospitality and tourism and commercial development along the rapidly improving highway corridors (I-26, Routes 25/70 and Highway 19).

Plastics, electronics assembly, metal machining and fabrication and nonwoven fabrics continue to be strong sectors throughout the region. Emerging manufacturing sectors include food products, natural supplements and bio-technology related industries. Some manufacturing initiatives are also emerging in alternative energies.

The common factors in each of these areas are (1) the need for entry level workers with sufficient understanding of the principles of advanced manufacturing to be trainable and to become successful in the workplace; and (2) the need for workers who have strong technical skills in certain critical areas of production – machining, industrial maintenance, engineering technicians and computer/machinery interfaces. The most often cited concern about the current

workforce that was revealed in a recent regional survey of manufacturing employers conducted by AdvantageWest and NC ESC was:

“Employers are looking for workers with good work habits, who possess basic literacy skills, strong interpersonal skills, capable of solving complex problems, and are capable of effectively using critical thinking skills on the job. Employers are also looking for a diverse workforce that demonstrates a positive attitude, the ability and initiative to learn new things, and motivation to get the job done.”

*Expected Vacancies and Skills Needed Survey Results –  
AdvantageWest Economic Development Group (September 2008)*

**Goals: Make effective improvements in the basic skills, soft skills and workplace ethics of the local labor force.**

In this regard the Mountain Area Workforce Development Board will continue to work with its workforce partners to build the basic skills, soft skills and work ethics of the local labor force. In coordination with the community colleges WorkKeys, WIN, the NC CRC and the Personal Skills Assessments offered through WorkKeys will become an increasing part of our local workforce development efforts. We will explore and develop ways to provide these services to existing employees, students and jobs seekers during the strategic plan implementation period. (also see above – Adult and Dislocated Worker, Goal #1, Tactic #1 “An in depth interpersonal skills, communications and work ethics course....”).

**Hospitality and Leisure**

The hospitality, leisure and tourism sectors are clearly among the most rapidly growing sectors throughout the region. Customer services and interpersonal communications skills are especially crucial to almost every occupation within the industry. Basic workplace courtesy, problem solving, making a positive impression and achieving the “5 Star Mentality” are extremely important for successful entry and advancement in these career fields. In many cases jobseekers might not recognize the career ladder opportunities available within the industry.

**Goals: Build stronger collaborations with the hospitality industry akin to the relationships developed through the Manufacturing Skills Gap Workgroup.**

Develop training programs to assist in addressing business-identified skills gaps. Develop access to part-time and flex-time job opportunities available for youth, students, older workers and job seekers who have difficulties with traditional full-time work schedules.

**Attachment A:**  
**Mountain Area Workforce Development Board**  
**Workforce Investment Act Youth Programs 2008 -09**

Consistent with the Workforce Investment Act's intent to increase the skill levels and credentials achieved by economically disadvantaged youth, the MAWDB has invested in In-school Youth programs that emphasize career development and high school graduation. Similarly, the MAWDB has designed its Out-of-School Youth programs to emphasize dropout recovery and/or earning a GED and/or technical skills credentials.

**In-School Youth Programs:**

**Buncombe County Schools – Clyde A. Erwin High School**

The MAWDB funds a teacher's position and provides computers and software for a computer assisted instructional classroom. This "credit recovery" program helps at-risk students overcome skill deficits that are causing them to fall behind in their efforts to achieve high school graduation. The program also provides career assessment and guidance and counseling assistance with life skills and overcoming personal/social crises that could interfere with meeting graduation requirements.

**Madison County Schools – Madison High School**

A WIA counselor works with at-risk students from low income families to provide career counseling, approaches for managing personal/family matters and in-school work experience assignments. These services are designed to help students continue their education through high school graduation and beyond.

**Transylvania County Schools – Brevard & Rosman High Schools & Davidson River Alternative**

WIA supports a portion of three counselors (one in each high school) to assist at-risk students in achieving high school graduation. Counselors assist with career planning and understanding the importance of educational achievement in attaining career goals. Counselors also help students work through personal, social and family related issues so that they can continue their educational pursuits.

**Out-of School Youth Programs**

**Henderson County Schools – Balfour Alternative School**

A WIA youth counselor works with students who have dropped out of school and encourages them to return and earn their high school diplomas. Students who return to school enroll in the Balfour Alternative school. The WIA counselor provides encouragement, counseling services and in-school work experience opportunities with school faculty and staff.

**Buncombe County Out-of-School Youth Program**

The Buncombe County OSY program is operated by staff at the Mountain Area JobLink Career Center. WIA youth applicants are provided career guidance, assistance in getting their GED and tuition and book support for attending the community college technical skills training programs.

**Table #1: Labor Supply & Commuting Patterns (2000 Census)**  
**Mountain Area Workforce Development Board**

<http://www.census.gov/population/www/cen2000/commuting.html>

**Resident Remaining in the Region to Work: 2000 Census**

<b>Buncombe County</b>		
Total County Residents Working Inside the Mountain Area	95,955	95.8%
Total Co. Residents Working Outside the Mountain Area	4,178	4.2%
<b>Henderson County</b>		
Total County Residents Working Inside the Mountain Area	36,807	95.1%
Total Co. Residents Working Outside the Mountain Area	1,904	4.9%
<b>Madison County</b>		
Total County Residents Working Inside the Mountain Area	8,021	93.6%
Total Co. Residents Working Outside the Mountain Area	549	6.4%
<b>Transylvania County</b>		
Total County Residents Working Inside the Mountain Area	11,525	94.1%
Total Co. Residents Working Outside the Mountain Area	729	5.9%
<b>Mountain Area Totals</b>		
<b>Total LA Residents Working Inside the Mountain Area</b>	<b>152,308</b>	<b>95.4%</b>
<b>Total LA Residents Working Outside the Mountain Area</b>	<b>7,360</b>	<b>4.6%</b>

**Commuters Coming into the Mountain Area for Work: 2000 Census**

Haywood to Buncombe	4096	
Haywood to Henderson	375	
Haywood to Madison	13	
Haywood to Transylvania	51	4535
McDowell to Buncombe	1670	
McDowell to Henderson	51	1721
Yancey to Madison	144	
Yancey to Buncombe	679	
Yancey to Henderson	19	842
Polk to Buncombe	200	
Polk to Henderson	808	
Polk to Transylvania	28	1036
Jackson to Buncombe	232	
Jackson to Transylvania	149	381
Rutherford to Buncombe	265	
Rutherford to Henderson	142	407
Total - All Bordering Counties exc Haywood		4387
<b>Total MA Workers from All Bordering Counties</b>		<b>8,922</b>

<b>Mountain Area Workers Coming from Bordering Counties</b>	<b>8,922</b>	<b>5.53%</b>
<b>Total LA Residents Working Inside the Mountain Area</b>	<b>152,308</b>	<b>94.47%</b>
<b>Total MA Employment from MA Counties &amp; Bordering Cos.</b>	<b>161,230</b>	

**Table 2: Mountain Area + Haywood - Labor Force and Employment Growth: 2002 - 2007**

Geographic Area	Labor Force 2002 - 2007 (Annual Averages)				Employment 2002 - 2007 (Annual Averages)			
	Labor Force 2002	Labor Force 2007	Labor Force Change 2002 - 07	Percent LF Change 2002 - 07	Employment 2002	Employment 2007	Employment Change 2002- 07	Percent Emp Change 2002 - 07
<b>MA + Haywood</b>	<b>205,106</b>	<b>218,961</b>	<b>13,855</b>	<b>6.8%</b>	<b>193,924</b>	<b>211,071</b>	<b>17,147</b>	<b>8.8%</b>
Buncombe	111,054	119,352	8,298	7.5%	105,436	115,146	9,710	9.2%
Haywood	26,881	27,788	907	3.4%	25,153	26,677	1,524	6.1%
Henderson	44,267	48,204	3,937	8.9%	41,967	46,516	4,549	10.8%
Madison	9,655	9,979	324	3.4%	9,078	9,590	512	5.6%
Transylvania	13,249	13,638	389	2.9%	12,290	13,142	852	6.9%
North Carolina	4,210,018	4,519,186	309,168	7.3%	3,930,736	4,308,624	377,888	9.6%

Source <http://eslmi40.esc.state.nc.us/ThematicLAUS/clfasp/startCLFSAAY.asp>

Notes:

Labor Force Growth Rates in Buncombe (7.5%) and Henderson (8.9%) surpassed the State's growth rate(7.3%).

Employment Growth Rates in Henderson (10.8%) surpassed the NC growth rate (9.6%).

The rate of employment growth in the region and all its counties surpassed the rate of increase in the labor force from 2002 - 2007.

In the five county region an additional 13,855 people entered the local labor force, but during the same time an additional 17,147 people got jobs.

Table 3: Four and Five Year High School Cohort Graduation Rates

(Excluding

Alternative, Special Education, and Junior High Schools)

[https://www.rep.dpi.state.nc.us/docs/2008/grad\\_school.xls](https://www.rep.dpi.state.nc.us/docs/2008/grad_school.xls)

School Name	4 year Cohort						5 Year Cohort						2003 Fresh Graduating in 2008 (5 Yr Cohort)
	2003-2007			2004-2008			2002-2007			2003-2008			
	Denominator	Numerator	Rate	Denominator	Numerator	Rate	Denominator	Numerator	Rate	Denominator	Numerator	Rate	
<b>Asheville City Schools</b>													
Asheville High	305	244	80.0%	315	227	72.1%	290	196	67.6%	305	250	82.0%	6
<b>Buncombe Co Schools</b>													
A C Reynolds High	372	299	80.4%	349	272	77.9%	360	276	76.7%	372	305	82.0%	6
Charles D Owen High	194	142	73.2%	212	164	77.4%	248	174	70.2%	194	148	76.3%	6
Clyde A Erwin High	304	203	66.8%	334	216	64.7%	278	168	60.4%	304	220	72.4%	17
Enka High	349	261	74.8%	319	240	75.2%	318	241	75.8%	349	271	77.7%	10
North Buncombe High	279	214	76.7%	247	208	84.2%	315	257	81.6%	279	218	78.1%	4
T C Roberson High	303	248	81.8%	355	265	74.6%	377	301	79.8%	303	256	84.5%	8
<b>Non Alternative HS</b>	<b>1,801</b>	<b>1,367</b>	<b>75.9%</b>	<b>1,816</b>	<b>1,365</b>	<b>75.2%</b>	<b>1,896</b>	<b>1,417</b>	<b>74.7%</b>	<b>1,801</b>	<b>1,418</b>	<b>78.7%</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>Haywood County Schools</b>													
Pisgah High	231	197	85.3%	252	210	83.3%	235	185	78.7%	231	199	86.1%	2
Tuscola High	291	225	77.3%	282	224	79.4%	347	240	69.2%	291	227	78.0%	2
<b>Non Alternative HS</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>422</b>	<b>80.8%</b>	<b>534</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>81.3%</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>73.0%</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>426</b>	<b>81.6%</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Henderson County Schools</b>													
East Henderson High	237	191	80.6%	249	215	86.3%	259	209	80.7%	237	193	81.4%	2
Hendersonville High	181	168	92.8%	154	137	89.0%	141	117	83.0%	181	168	92.8%	0
North Henderson High	208	158	76.0%	221	160	72.4%	254	188	74.0%	208	162	77.9%	4
West Henderson High	238	206	86.6%	284	240	84.5%	248	205	82.7%	238	208	87.4%	2
<b>Non Alternative HS</b>	<b>864</b>	<b>723</b>	<b>83.7%</b>	<b>908</b>	<b>752</b>	<b>82.8%</b>	<b>902</b>	<b>719</b>	<b>79.7%</b>	<b>864</b>	<b>731</b>	<b>84.6%</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Madison County Schools</b>													
Madison High	206	158	76.7%	181	134	74.0%	209	159	76.1%	206	163	79.1%	5
<b>Transylvania County Schools</b>													
Brevard High	188	164	87.2%	176	143	81.3%	172	139	80.8%	188	166	88.3%	2
Rosman High	80	66	82.5%	76	66	86.8%	106	88	83.0%	80	68	85.0%	2
<b>Non Alternative HS</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>85.8%</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>82.9%</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>81.7%</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>87.3%</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Five County Regional Total</b>													
<b>Non Alternative HS</b>	<b>3,966</b>	<b>3,144</b>	<b>79.3%</b>	<b>4,006</b>	<b>3,121</b>	<b>77.9%</b>	<b>4,157</b>	<b>3,143</b>	<b>75.6%</b>	<b>3,966</b>	<b>3,222</b>	<b>81.2%</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Regional Alternative High Schools</b>													
Buncombe Community-East	30	13	43.3%	41	13	31.7%	22	8	36.4%	30	16	53.3%	3
Buncombe Co. Middle College	11	8	72.7%	42	29	69.0%	NA	NA		11	10	90.9%	2
Central Haywood High	46	20	43.5%	38	21	55.3%	25	4	16.0%	46	20	43.5%	0
Balfour Education Center	41	19	46.3%	35	14	40.0%	42	19	45.2%	41	20	48.8%	1
Davidson River School	13	2	15.4%	14	1	7.1%	NA	NA		13	2	15.4%	0
<b>Regional Total Alternative High Schools</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>44.0%</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>45.9%</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>34.8%</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>48.2%</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Regional Total All Schools</b>													
<b>All High Schools</b>	<b>4,107</b>	<b>3,206</b>	<b>78.1%</b>	<b>4,176</b>	<b>3,199</b>	<b>76.6%</b>	<b>4,246</b>	<b>3,174</b>	<b>74.8%</b>	<b>4,107</b>	<b>3,290</b>	<b>80.1%</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>North Carolina Statewide</b>													
<b>All Schools</b>	<b>105,799</b>	<b>73,553</b>	<b>69.5%</b>	<b>108,850</b>	<b>76,556</b>	<b>70.3%</b>	<b>104,606</b>	<b>73,535</b>	<b>70.3%</b>	<b>105,787</b>	<b>75,961</b>	<b>71.8%</b>	<b>2,408</b>

"Denominator" The number of students entering 9th grade - "Numerator" of students graduating 4 (or 5) years after entering in the 9th grade.

From the Freshman class of 2003 - 84 additional students graduated in the 5th year (2008).

**Table 4: 2008 Scholastic Aptitude Test Data - Mountain Area + Haywood**

School System & School	Total Students*	# Tested	% Tested	Math Score	CR Score	Writing Score	Sub-Total Score	Grand Total Score
United States	3,375,242	1,518,859	45.0%	515	502	494	1017	1511
North Carolina	89,590	56,442	63.0%	511	496	482	1007	1489
<b>Asheville HS/ City</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>81.9%</b>	<b>527</b>	<b>539</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>1064</b>	<b>1569</b>
	1440							
<b>Buncombe County</b>	<b>1,459</b>	<b>804</b>	<b>55.1%</b>	<b>542</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>1064</b>	<b>1569</b>
AC Reynolds HS	269	155	57.6%	559	544	516	1103	1619
Buncombe Co Middle College	37	7	18.9%	461	536	514	997	1511
Charles D Owen HS	167	101	60.5%	539	521	500	1060	1560
Clyde A Erwin HS	229	94	41.0%	509	483	456	992	1448
Enka HS	247	129	52.2%	510	501	481	1011	1492
North Buncombe HS	196	101	51.5%	552	517	507	1069	1576
TC Robertson HS	294	217	73.8%	562	538	533	1100	1633
<b>Haywood County</b>	<b>474</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>49.8%</b>	<b>547</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>503</b>	<b>1058</b>	<b>1561</b>
Pisgah HS	215	94	43.7%	524	499	494	1023	1517
Tuscola HS	247	141	57.1%	563	519	509	1082	1591
	801							
<b>Henderson County</b>	<b>805</b>	<b>422</b>	<b>52.4%</b>	<b>538</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>498</b>	<b>1055</b>	<b>1553</b>
East Henderson HS	241	96	39.8%	550	523	506	1073	1579
Hendersonville HS	146	100	68.5%	550	527	519	1077	1596
North Henderson HS	173	85	49.1%	520	489	475	1009	1484
West Henderson HS	241	141	58.5%	534	523	493	1057	1550
<b>Madison HS/ County</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>46.6%</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>486</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>1009</b>	<b>1484</b>
<b>Transylvania County</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>51.8%</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>515</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>1044</b>	<b>1539</b>
Brevard HS	139	84	60.4%	541	526	502	1067	1569
Rosman HS	62	30	48.4%	496	483	477	979	1456
<b>Regional Totals &amp; Averages</b>	<b>3,327</b>	<b>1,832</b>	<b>55.06%</b>	<b>538.1</b>	<b>519.6</b>	<b>501.2</b>	<b>1058.1</b>	<b>1559.6</b>
Regional Averages - US			10.06%	23.1	17.6	7.2	41.1	48.6
Regional Averages - NC			-7.94%	27.1	23.6	19.2	51.1	70.6

Source: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/reporting/sat/2008>

**STATE OF THE WORKFORCE 2008**  
**Mountain Area Workforce Development Board**  
**Southwestern Workforce Development Board**  
 Developed by Tom Tveidt

**Table 5: Labor Force Participation Rates**

	MAWDB	SWDB	NC	US
In Labor Force	62.1	58.5	65.8	65.4
Employed	59.2	55.5	60.5	60.7
Unemployed	2.9	3	4.4	4.3
Not in Labor Force	37.9	41.5	34.2	34.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2005/2006 average

**Table 5A:**

**Male Labor Force Participation Rates by Age Group - 2005-2006 Avg**

Males	MAWDB	SWDB	NC	US
16 to 19	57.3	47.1	48.2	46.3
20 to 24	85.3	81.6	82.7	79.8
25 to 29	87.4	85.7	88.9	88.7
30 to 34	95.1	90.7	91.0	90.5
35 to 44	89.8	86.1	89.6	89.6
45 to 54	86.6	81.9	85.1	86.1
55 to 59	74.0	73.9	74.4	76.3
60 to 64	48.8	47.7	53.8	57.3
65 to 69	23.0	22.8	32.0	34.2
70 to 74	19.3	16.7	20.2	20.8
75 and over	8.9	4.7	9.1	8.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2005/2006 average

**Table 5B:**

**Female Labor Force Participation Rates by Age Group - 2005-2006 Avg**

Females	MAWDB	SWDB	NC	US
16 to 19	56.5	58.5	46.5	46.5
20 to 24	79.6	74.6	74.4	73.3
25 to 29	77.1	79.8	75.7	75.2
30 to 34	74.9	79.2	78.8	73.5
35 to 44	75.7	78.1	76.5	74.9
45 to 54	72.2	74.0	74.4	74.9
55 to 59	60.3	55.3	63.6	64.4
60 to 64	39.4	37.9	41.9	45.2
65 to 69	22.0	16.9	21.3	23.4
70 to 74	14.2	13.4	12.2	12.3
75 and over	7.5	5.0	4.1	3.8

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2005/2006 average

**MA & SW LFP Rates minus State & US LFP Rates**

MA - NC	MA - US	SW - NC	SW - US
9.1	11	-1.1	0.8
2.6	5.5	-1.1	1.8
-1.5	-1.3	-3.2	-3
4.1	4.6	-0.3	0.2
0.2	0.2	-3.5	-3.5
1.5	0.5	-3.2	-4.2
-0.4	-2.3	-0.5	-2.4
-5	-8.5	-6.1	-9.6
-9	-11.2	-9.2	-11.4
-0.9	-1.5	-3.5	-4.1
-0.2	0.2	-4.4	-4

MA - NC	MA - US	SW - NC	SW - US
10	10	12	12
5.2	6.3	0.2	1.3
1.4	1.9	4.1	4.6
-3.9	1.4	0.4	5.7
-0.8	0.8	1.6	3.2
-2.2	-2.7	-0.4	-0.9
-3.3	-4.1	-8.3	-9.1
-2.5	-5.8	-4	-7.3
0.7	-1.4	-4.4	-6.5
2	1.9	1.2	1.1
3.4	3.7	0.9	1.2

Green Above both NC & US Averages  
 Yellow Above either the NC or US Averages  
 Pink Below both the NC & US Averages

**Table 6: JobLink Center Customer Service Levels and Characteristics: 7/1/07 - 6/30/08**  
**Mountain Area Workforce Development Board**

Levels of Service by Gender	Mountain Area	Henderson Co (BRCC)	Madison Co	CC Based JobLinks	Asheville JL @ ESC	Hendersonville JL @ ESC	Transylvania JL @ ESC	ESC Based JobLinks	All JL/ESC Total
MALE	1,366	1,297	191	2,854	6,406	3,305	1,083	10,794	13,648
% of JobLink Total	46.2%	45.8%	37.7%	45.3%	55.9%	58.4%	53.2%	56.3%	53.6%
FEMALE	1,562	1,473	307	3,342	4,860	2,250	918	8,028	11,370
% of JobLink Total	52.8%	52.0%	60.7%	53.1%	42.4%	39.7%	45.1%	41.9%	44.7%
<i>Number not revealing gender</i>	31	60	8	99	202	109	36	347	446
<b>Total Served (= Total Giving Age) * **</b>	<b>2,959</b>	<b>2,830</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>6,295</b>	<b>11,468</b>	<b>5,664</b>	<b>2,037</b>	<b>19,169</b>	<b>25,464</b>
<b>% of Regional Total Served*</b>	<b>11.6%</b>	<b>11.1%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>24.7%</b>	<b>45.0%</b>	<b>22.2%</b>	<b>8.0%</b>	<b>75.3%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

\* I believe that if an individual visits more than one JL he/she is double counted.

\*\* In every Joblink more clients chose to reveal their age than their gender.

Levels of Service by Age Group	Mountain Area	Henderson Co (BRCC)	Madison Co	CC Based JobLinks	Asheville JL @ ESC	Hendersonville JL @ ESC	Transylvania JL @ ESC	ESC Based JobLinks	All JL/ESC Total
<b>Ages 21 and Under</b>	310	384	88	782	872	572	198	1,642	2,424
% of Joblink Total	10.5%	13.6%	17.4%	12.4%	7.6%	10.1%	9.7%	8.6%	9.5%
<i>% of Age Group's Regional Total</i>	<b>12.8%</b>	<b>15.8%</b>	<b>3.6%</b>	<b>32.3%</b>	<b>36.0%</b>	<b>23.6%</b>	<b>8.2%</b>	<b>67.7%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Ages 22-59</b>	2,546	2,305	398	5,249	9,937	4,702	1,712	16,351	21,600
% of Joblink Total	86.0%	81.4%	78.7%	83.4%	86.6%	83.0%	84.0%	85.3%	84.8%
<i>% of Age Group's Regional Total</i>	<b>11.8%</b>	<b>10.7%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>24.3%</b>	<b>46.0%</b>	<b>21.8%</b>	<b>7.9%</b>	<b>75.7%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Ages 60 and Over</b>	103	141	20	264	659	390	127	1,176	1,440
% of Joblink Total	3.5%	5.0%	4.0%	4.2%	5.7%	6.9%	6.2%	6.1%	5.7%
<i>% of Age Group's Regional Total</i>	<b>7.2%</b>	<b>9.8%</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	<b>18.3%</b>	<b>45.8%</b>	<b>27.1%</b>	<b>8.8%</b>	<b>81.7%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Percentage of Each JobLink's Clients Age 50+**

<b>Ages 50 +</b>	612	574	106	1,292	2,710	1,335	478	4,523	5,815
% of Joblink Customers Age 50+	20.7%	20.3%	20.9%	20.5%	23.6%	23.6%	23.5%	23.6%	22.8%

**Table 6a: JobLink Center Customer Service Levels and Characteristics: 7/1/07 - 6/30/08**  
**Mountain Area Workforce Development Board**

Levels of Service by Education Level	Mountain Area	Henderson Co (BRCC)	Madison Co	CC Based JobLinks	Asheville JL @ ESC	Hendersonville JL @ ESC	Transylvania JL @ ESC	ESC Based JobLinks	All JL/ESC Total
<b>Less than 12 Years</b>	420	366	89	875	534	459	48	1,041	1,916
% of Joblink Total	14.2%	12.9%	17.6%	13.9%	4.7%	8.1%	2.4%	5.4%	7.5%
<i>% of Educ. Group's Regional Total</i>	21.9%	19.1%	4.6%	45.7%	27.9%	24.0%	2.5%	54.3%	100.0%
<b>Completed 12 years</b>	1,360	1,430	282	3,072	1,712	1,350	162	3,224	6,296
% of Joblink Total	46.0%	50.5%	55.7%	48.8%	14.9%	23.8%	8.0%	16.8%	24.7%
<i>% of Educ. Group's Regional Total</i>	21.6%	22.7%	4.5%	48.8%	27.2%	21.4%	2.6%	51.2%	100.0%
<b>More than 12 &amp; Less than 16 yrs.</b>	632	528	56	1,216	696	596	74	1,366	2,582
% of Joblink Total	21.4%	18.7%	11.1%	19.3%	6.1%	10.5%	3.6%	7.1%	10.1%
<i>% of Educ. Group's Regional Total</i>	24.5%	20.4%	2.2%	47.1%	27.0%	23.1%	2.9%	52.9%	100.0%
<b>16 years</b>	254	217	18	489	222	187	34	443	932
% of Joblink Total	8.6%	7.7%	3.6%	7.8%	1.9%	3.3%	1.7%	2.3%	3.7%
<i>% of Educ. Group's Regional Total</i>	27.3%	23.3%	1.9%	52.5%	23.8%	20.1%	3.6%	47.5%	100.0%
<b>More than 16 Years</b>	117	81	9	207	108	65	8	181	388
% of Joblink Total	4.0%	2.9%	1.8%	3.3%	0.9%	1.1%	0.4%	0.9%	1.5%
<i>% of Educ. Group's Regional Total</i>	30.2%	20.9%	2.3%	53.4%	27.8%	16.8%	2.1%	46.6%	100.0%
<b>Not Revealing Education Level</b>	176	208	52	436	8,196	3,007	1,711	12,914	13,350
% of Joblink Total	5.9%	7.3%	10.3%	6.9%	71.5%	53.1%	84.0%	67.4%	52.4%
<i>% of Educ. Group's Regional Total</i>	1.3%	1.6%	0.4%	3.3%	61.4%	22.5%	12.8%	96.7%	100.0%



## MOUNTAIN AREA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEMBERS

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<p>David Bailey United Way Asheville, NC</p>	<p>Rick Elingburg Employment Security Commission Asheville, NC</p>	<p>William Maloney Software Solutions Asheville, NC</p>	<p>Andrew Tate Henderson County Partnership for Economic Development Hendersonville, NC</p>
<p>John Beatty Grove Park Inn Resort &amp; Spa Asheville, NC</p>	<p>Danny Hardin Smoky Mountain Machining, Inc. Asheville, NC</p>	<p>William Mance Asheville, NC</p>	<p>Matthew Wechtel NC Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Weaverville, NC</p>
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<p>Louis Black Schenck Job Corps Pisgah Forest, NC</p>	<p>Dr. Barbara Keaton A-B Tech Community College Asheville, NC</p>	<p>Dr. Bruce Phillips Mars Hill, NC</p>	<hr style="border: 1px solid black;"/> <p>Leland Blankenship Buncombe County Schools Asheville, NC <i>Ex Officio</i></p>
<p>Mack Boone, Jr. Mars Hill, NC</p>	<p>Robert Kendrick Kendrick &amp; Associates Weaverville, NC</p>	<p>Jerry Plemmons Hot Springs Health Program Marshall, NC</p>	<p>Lorraine Poe Asheville, NC</p>
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