



**Training and  
Employment  
Opportunities for  
Individuals with  
Intellectual  
Disabilities**

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**As Required by**

**Senate Bill 2027**

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**Health and Human Services**

**Commission**

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**TEXAS**  
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## Executive Summary

Senate Bill (S.B.) 2027, 85th Legislature, Regular Session, 2017, requires a one-time report studying occupational skills training (OST) programs in Texas for individuals with intellectual disabilities. For the purpose of this study and report, intellectual disabilities encompasses intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD); therefore, the report will use the term IDD throughout. Additionally, the report must determine regions in the state where the training programs should be improved or expanded, as well as strategies for placing these individuals into fulfilling jobs via existing or improved or expanded programs.

A joint workgroup consisting of Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) and Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) and external stakeholders discussed the current state and validity of OST opportunities in Texas for persons with IDD. To assist in the collection of data, the workgroup developed the S.B. 2027 Intellectual and Developmental Disability Occupational Skills Training Program (IDDOTP) survey to provide data on existing OST programs throughout the state available to individuals with IDD. The workgroup distributed this survey statewide to professional staff, individuals with IDD and their family members, and other stakeholders. The results were regionalized based on the 11 established HHSC regions to facilitate the identification of areas needing improved or expanded OST programs. The results indicated a lack of OST programs throughout the state available to individuals with IDD.

The results from the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis HHSC performed indicate statewide difficulty obtaining funding for OST programs and a lack of standardization across OST programs; however, the analysis demonstrates the existence of established resources such as community colleges, universities, and workforce development boards throughout the state.

# 1. Introduction

S.B. 2027 requires HHSC, in conjunction with TWC, to conduct a study regarding OST programs available in Texas for individuals with IDD. The study must determine:

- regions in this state where the training programs should be improved or expanded; and
- strategies for placing individuals with IDD into fulfilling jobs using existing or improved training programs.

Following the study, HHSC must submit a report by December 1, 2018, to the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the speaker of the House of Representatives, and the appropriate standing committees of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

This report uses data from an electronic survey collected from March 7, 2018, through May 31, 2018, as well as research conducted by the S.B. 2027 workgroup on existing OST programs throughout the state for individuals with IDD.

## 2. Background

There is a scarcity of existing OST programs for individuals with IDD in Texas. OST programs in Texas are administered by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) or TWC.

TEA's independent school districts (ISDs) offer Career and Technical Education programs available to all students, which vary based on local workforce development needs. These courses are typically not tailored to individuals with IDD.

TWC provides training and retraining programs for job seekers with a focus on programs promoting growth of a skilled labor force in occupations and industries supporting the high demands of Texas employers. These programs are open to anyone who meets the program-specific entrance qualifications and are not tailored to individuals with IDD.

Project SEARCH® is a business-led employment preparation program. Participants complete a one-year internship at a business site in their senior year of high school. There are 27 Project SEARCH® sites throughout Texas operated by the host business, an ISD, Texas Workforce Solutions-Vocational Rehabilitation Services (TWS-VRS), and a community partner such as a community center. After graduation, Project SEARCH® participants are often hired by the host business. If this employment option does not work out, the graduate will receive assistance looking for employment at another business in the community.

High schools, community colleges, universities, Project SEARCH® sites, Local Intellectual and Developmental Disability Authority (LIDDAs), and private entities, such as foundations, offer a variety of employment training programs (i.e., programs that do not provide a certificate or formal training in one industry) for individuals with IDD. Some programs offer assistance with job placement through an employment specialist while others use existing educational staff for this purpose. Placements from these programs typically result in low-skilled, entry-level positions.

Research identified three existing programs for individuals with IDD offering a certificate of licensure as well as assistance finding employment.

1. The Texas A&M PATHS program provides training to become a direct support professional working with people with disabilities, a paraprofessional working within schools, or a childcare professional working with children.

2. The University of Texas Center for Disability Study E4Texas program combines classroom instruction with practical career-building experiences in addition to independent living skills and self-determination for individuals who want to become a personal attendant.<sup>1</sup>
3. The El Paso Community College HIGHER OST has three programs that prepare individuals with IDD for testing to be certified in the following occupations:
  - a. Automotive Technology with readiness to be certified by Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) in Automotive Mechanics Technology;
  - b. Industrial Technology Welding with readiness to be certified as an American Welders Society (AWS) Certified Welder; and
  - c. Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning Residential (HVAC) with readiness to be certified with a 410 HVAC Certification by Inscos Distributing, Inc.

Currently, El Paso Community College serves individuals who have a diagnosis of mild to moderate IDD, and has plans to serve individuals with more significant cognitive disabilities in the future.

The S.B. 2027 workgroup distributed a survey statewide to professional staff, advocates, individuals with IDD and their family members, and other key stakeholders. The survey provided data to determine existing OST programs throughout the state available to individuals with IDD. The results were regionalized to facilitate the identification of areas needing improved and/or expanded OST programs. Responses also indicated there is an interest in having available OST programs for individuals with IDD in Texas.

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<sup>1</sup> Personal attendant is defined as "an employee hired to assist a functionally limited person with activities of daily living." *Source Document: Medical Dictionary, © 2009 Farlex and Partners.*

### 3. Workgroup, Survey Data, and Research

To complete the requirements listed in S.B. 2027, HHSC:

- Developed a joint workgroup consisting of HHSC and TWC staff, and external stakeholders from a host of community organizations;
- Conducted the S.B. 2027 IDDOTP Survey; and
- Completed a SWOT analysis of the 11 HHS regions to evaluate existing OST programs.

#### Senate Bill 2027 Workgroup

The S.B. 2027 workgroup focused on the two study requirements:

1. Determine regions in this state where the training programs should be improved or expanded; and
2. Determine strategies for placing trained individuals with ID into fulfilling jobs using existing or improved training programs.

Additionally, the workgroup gained feedback from stakeholders through a survey and participated in a regionalized study of existing OST programs for individuals with IDD.

#### IDDOTP Survey

HHSC conducted the IDDOTP survey from March 7, 2018, through May 31, 2018, for individuals with IDD who are interested in OST opportunities in Texas and invited providers, advocates, family members, and other key stakeholders to participate. The workgroup designed the survey to gather employment- and occupationally related information. Respondents had an opportunity to share their preferences in OST programs currently available in their geographic area, or their desires for OST programs they would like to see developed.

Respondents expressed desires for themselves and family members:

*The few programs about which we are made aware in Dripping Springs, are typically for higher functioning abilities. None seem appropriate for mid-lower IDD students/adults. And even if there is a program or opportunity that would serve a variety of functionalities, there is no offer of transportation, which is also a big deterrent to participation.*

Respondents also expressed concerns about the need for improved services for individuals with IDD:

*Most of the people with disabilities do not receive viable job training or job opportunities once they graduate from high school. They end up in old people daycare facilities or stay at home and watch TV all day. We need more job opportunities for people with disabilities.*

The IDDOTP survey had 1,053 respondents who provided feedback concerning occupational interest and education for Texans with IDD. Individuals with IDD, advocates, and others who participated in the survey had the option of taking the full survey or a partial survey. Of the 1,053 respondents, 224 individuals with IDD or someone acting as an advocate on behalf of an individual with IDD completed the full survey. Respondents' ages ranged from 14 to 69 years with over half of respondents between ages 14 and 29. Survey responses indicated that 73 percent of individuals were unemployed. Regarding OST opportunities, 53 percent of respondents were not satisfied with the OST opportunities in their area while 74 percent have never been involved in a formal OST program. However, the vast majority of respondents, or 84 percent, stated they would attend an OST program that would help them get a better job, demonstrating the demand for OST programs in the state.

Texans with IDD can receive a variety of state- and federally funded services. Respondents completing the IDDOTP survey received funding through seven Texas Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waivers, Community First Choice (CFC), and/or TWC/legacy Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS), with 75 percent receiving services through the Home and Community-based Services (HCBS) or Community Living Assistance and Support Services waiver programs. It should be noted that all HCBS waivers provide some type of employment support funding.

Survey respondents were also asked to provide feedback on the types of occupational industries in which they would have interest in receiving OST. Respondents were allowed to pick up to five occupations in areas such as arts, design, social service, food/restaurant service, office/clerical, hospitality, computer, technology, attendant care, healthcare, building/grounds maintenance, construction trades, and others. This information gave insight into the desires of Texans with ID and their career dreams. Over 30 percent of respondents selected arts, design,



entertainment, sports, and media; community/social services; and food/restaurant as industries of interest.<sup>2</sup>

There were many comments from respondents expressing a broad range of concerns and needs about OST in Texas. One respondent said, "As a parent of an adult son with autism, it seems like such a long process and I am stuck. Son was only recently diagnosed. I know this is normal but I need help too. I'm looking..."

Another respondent stated, "The occupational training services in our area are not utilized in ways that assist individuals in gaining true work skills. Most of the programs only provide subminimum wage for unfulfilling work."

## **Comprehensive Evaluation**

HHSC researched, reviewed, and compiled a list of existing OST programs throughout the state for individuals with ID.

The workgroup contacted public and private organizations throughout Texas regarding the existence of an OST program and researched the following:

- Job Corps in Texas;
- LIDDAs;
- TWC;
- Texas Association of Regional Governments;
- TEA;
- Goodwill Industries;
- Project SEARCH®;
- Most Texas community colleges and universities;
- Salvation Army;
- Private foundations and companies operating vocational training programs for individuals with ID; and
- Recommendations provided from participants of the IDDOTP Survey regarding existing OST programs.

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<sup>2</sup> A comprehensive list of demographic and response information on the 224 respondents is included in Appendix A.

## 4. SWOT Analysis by HHSC Regions

OST opportunities for individuals with IDD are limited and varied throughout the state. HHSC used a SWOT analysis for each of the 11 HHSC regions to evaluate existing OST programs.<sup>3</sup>

Nine of the 11 regions lack an OST program, and all 11 regions experience funding challenges and lack a standardized approach for OST programs for individuals with IDD in Texas. Other information points to urban areas having more OST opportunities and greater employment diversity. Some regions denoted the geographical makeup of Texas creates challenges for transportation to and from the urban areas that are more likely to have a successful OST program. Another commonality noted was employer lack of knowledge about IDD and this population's potential in the workforce. However, the analysis shows the state currently has critical infrastructure in place to develop and expand OST programs via a broad network of county governments, universities, colleges, LIDDAs, Project SEARCH® sites, and workforce development boards.<sup>4</sup>

Recommendations developed by the external stakeholder workgroup members based on the results of the survey and SWOT analysis are included in Appendix D.

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<sup>3</sup> A list of counties, universities, colleges, LIDDAs, Project SEARCH®, and workforce development boards are listed in Appendix C.

<sup>4</sup> The complete SWOT analysis is listed on Appendix B.

## 5. Conclusion

According to the S.B. 2027 survey, individuals with IDD, their family members, and other stakeholders expressed an interest in having OST programs available statewide that would result in gainful employment in professionally recognized positions.

Research conducted by the S.B. 2027 workgroup, the IDDOTP survey, and a comprehensive study of OST programs in the state determined most OST programs in Texas are not designed for individuals with IDD. Individuals with IDD often need assistance with basic academic skills and personalized attention to successfully navigate a learning environment. After successfully obtaining a certificate or license and a job, many will need ongoing support to maintain employment.

While there are programs around the state offering training to individuals with IDD, the majority do not provide certification or licensure opportunities or have a standardized method of instruction or curricula.

While the workgroup could only identify OST programs specifically designed for individuals with IDD at Texas A&M, The University of Texas, and El Paso Community College, these programs may represent models to study further to increase the access to OST programs for individuals with IDD in Texas.

## **List of Acronyms**

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Full Name</b>
HCBS	Home and Community-based Services
HHSC	Health and Human Services Commission
IDD	Intellectual and Developmental Disability
IDDOTP	Intellectual and Developmental Disability Occupational Skills Training Program Survey
ISD	Independent School District
LIDDA	Local Intellectual and Developmental Disability Authority
OST	Occupational Skills Training
PATHS	Postsecondary Access and Training in Human Services Program
S.B	Senate Bill
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
TEA	Texas Education Agency
TWS-VRS	Texas Workforce Solutions-Vocational Rehabilitation Services
TWC	Texas Workforce Commission
UT	The University of Texas

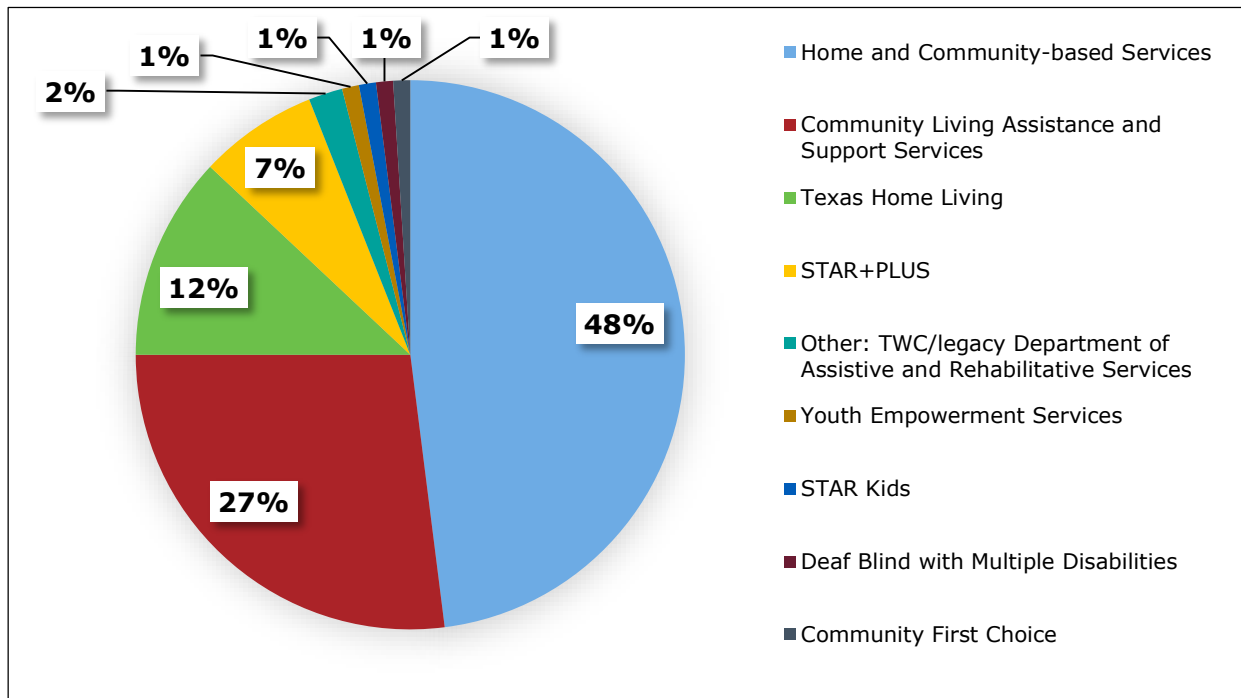
## **Appendix A. IDDOTP Response Information**

The following list provides a demographic breakdown and response information of the 224 individuals with IDD or someone acting as an advocate on behalf of an individual with IDD completing the full IDDOTP survey:

- Age:
  - ▶ 13 percent were 14 to 17 years of age
  - ▶ 24 percent were 18 to 21 years of age
  - ▶ 18 percent were 22 to 29 years of age
  - ▶ 26 percent were 30 to 49 years of age
  - ▶ 12 percent were 60 to 69 years of age
  - ▶ 7 percent chose not to answer
- Gender:
  - ▶ 53 percent were male
  - ▶ 45 percent were female
  - ▶ 2 percent chose not to answer
- Racial:
  - ▶ 49 percent were White (non-Hispanic)
  - ▶ 33 percent were White (Hispanic)
  - ▶ 10 percent were African-American
  - ▶ 3 percent were Asian
  - ▶ 1 percent were Native American
  - ▶ 4 percent chose not to answer
- 73 percent of respondents were unemployed
- 53 percent of respondents were not satisfied with the OST opportunities in their area
- 74 percent have never been involved in a formal OST program
- 84 percent would attend an OST program that would help them get a better job
- 71 percent would attend an OST program that offered no pay or salary during the training period
- 90 percent would attend an OST program that offered pay during the training period
- Respondents showed their willingness to attend an occupational training program as related to length of time:
  - ▶ 43 percent of respondents were willing to attend a 4- to 6-month program
  - ▶ 6 percent of respondents were willing to attend a 7- to 9-month program
  - ▶ 24 percent of respondents were willing to attend a 10- to 12-month program
  - ▶ 27 percent of respondents were willing to attend a 13- to 24-month program

Figure 1, below, reflects the public funding respondents taking the survey currently receive.

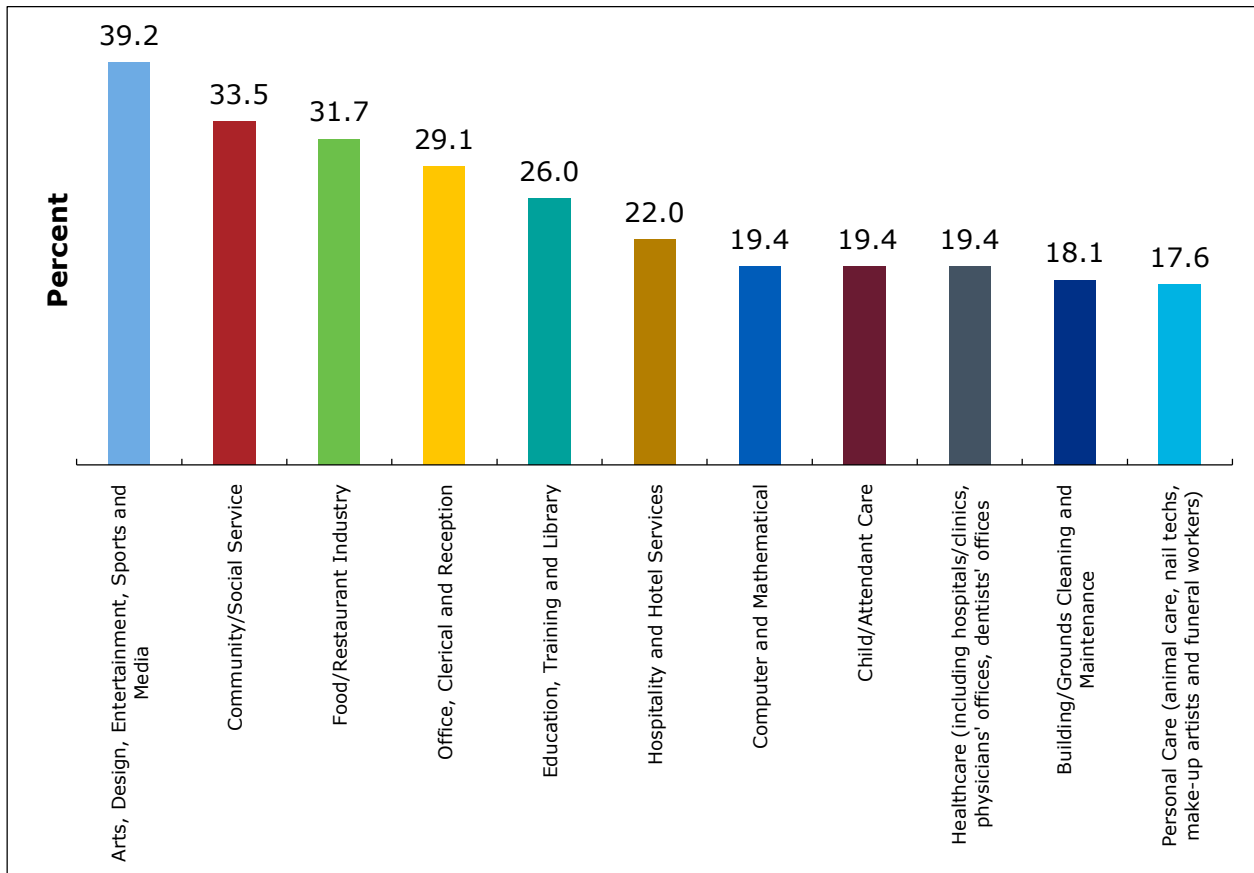
**Figure 1: Percentage of Respondents Receiving Public Funding**



- Home and Community-Based Services: 48 percent
- Community Living Assistance and Support Services: 27 percent
- Texas Home Living: 12 percent
- STAR+PLUS: 7 percent
- Other: TWC/legacy Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services: 2 percent
- Youth Empowerment Services: 1 percent
- STAR Kids: 1 percent
- Deaf Blind with Multiple Disabilities: 1 percent
- Community First Choice: 1 percent

Figure 2, below, represents the top 11 industries/OST types chosen by 79 percent (625) of the 795 total responses gathered for this survey item. Respondents could choose up to five industries.

**Figure 2: Top 11 Industries/OST Types Chosen by Respondents**



- Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media: 39.2 percent
- Community/Social Services: 33.5 percent
- Food/Restaurant Industry: 31.7 percent
- Office, Clerical, and Reception: 29.1 percent
- Education, Training, and Library: 26.0 percent
- Hospitality and Hotel Services: 22.0 percent
- Computer and Mathematical: 19.4 percent
- Child/Attendant Care: 19.4 percent
- Healthcare (including hospitals, clinics, physicians' offices, dentists' offices): 19.4 percent
- Building/Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance: 18.1 percent
- Personal Care (animal care, nail techs, make-up artists, and funeral workers): 17.6 percent

## Appendix B. SWOT Analysis Results

Table 1 includes information from Region 1, High Plains, which contains 41 counties. Of all survey responses, 29 respondents are from Region 1.

**Table 1. SWOT Analysis for Region 1, High Plains**

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four community colleges</li> <li>• Three universities/colleges</li> <li>• Three LIDDAs</li> <li>• Two Project SEARCH® sites</li> <li>• Two Workforce Development Boards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of standardized approach for OST programs for individuals with IDD in Texas</li> <li>• Lack of availability of funding</li> <li>• No OST program in region</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Texas Tech University Transition Academy program</li> <li>• Texas Tech University CASE program</li> <li>• Expand Project SEARCH® sites for both school-age students and adults</li> <li>• Expand community college OST programs for students with IDD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large rural areas with limited access to urban training centers and public transportation</li> <li>• Numerous counties with high intensity of agricultural operations limiting diversity in employers</li> <li>• Employment opportunities might be minimal outside of Potter and Lubbock counties</li> </ul>



Table 2 includes information from Region 2, Northwest Texas, which contains 30 counties. Of all survey responses, 31 respondents are from Region 1.

**Table 2. SWOT Analysis for Region 2, Northwest Texas**

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four community colleges</li> <li>• Three universities/colleges</li> <li>• Three LIDDAs</li> <li>• Two Workforce Development Boards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of standardized approach for OST programs for individuals with IDD in Texas</li> <li>• Lack of availability of funding</li> <li>• No OST program in region</li> <li>• No Project SEARCH® sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand community college OST programs for students with IDD</li> <li>• Expand Project SEARCH® sites for both school-age students and adults</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large rural areas with limited access to urban training centers and public transportation</li> <li>• Numerous counties with high intensity of agricultural operations limiting diversity in employers</li> <li>• Employment opportunities might be minimal</li> <li>• Employer lack of knowledge of IDD and potentiality of this segment of the workforce</li> </ul>

Table 3 includes information from Region 3, Metroplex, which contains 19 counties. Of all survey responses, 193 respondents are from Region 3.

**Table 3. SWOT Analysis for Region 3, Metroplex**

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eight community colleges</li> <li>• Nineteen universities/colleges</li> <li>• Seven LIDDAs</li> <li>• Nine Project SEARCH® Sites</li> <li>• Four Workforce Development Boards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of standardized approach for OST programs for individuals with IDD in Texas</li> <li>• Lack of availability and funding</li> <li>• No Project SEARCH® sites</li> <li>• No OST program in region</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand community college OST programs for students with IDD</li> <li>• Expand Project SEARCH® sites for both school-age students and adults</li> <li>• Urban areas might have increased employment opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural areas with limited access to urban training centers and public transportation in a few counties west of Fort Worth</li> <li>• Employer lack of knowledge of IDD and potentiality of this segment of the workforce</li> </ul>

Table 4 includes information from Region 4, Upper East Texas, which contains 23 counties. Of all survey responses, 97 respondents are from Region 4.

**Table 4. SWOT Analysis for Region 4, Upper East Texas**

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eight community colleges</li> <li>• Four universities/colleges</li> <li>• Three LIDDAs</li> <li>• One Project SEARCH® Site</li> <li>• Two Workforce Development Boards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of standardized approach for OST programs for individuals with IDD in Texas</li> <li>• Lack of availability and funding</li> <li>• No OST program in region</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand Project SEARCH® sites for both school-age students and adults</li> <li>• Expand community college OST programs for students with IDD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large rural areas with limited access to urban training centers and public transportation</li> <li>• Employment opportunities might be minimal</li> <li>• Employer lack of knowledge of IDD and potentiality of this segment of the workforce</li> </ul>

Table 5 includes information from Region 5, Southeast Texas, which contains 15 counties. Of all survey responses, 26 respondents are from Region 5.

**Table 5. SWOT Analysis for Region 5, Southeast Texas**

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One community college</li> <li>• Two universities/colleges</li> <li>• Two LIDDAs</li> <li>• Two Workforce Development Boards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of standardized approach for OST programs for individuals with IDD in Texas</li> <li>• Lack of availability and funding</li> <li>• No OST program in region</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand community college OST programs for students with IDD</li> <li>• Expand Project SEARCH® sites for both school-age students and adults</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large rural areas with limited access to urban training centers and public transportation</li> <li>• Employment opportunities might be minimal</li> <li>• Employer lack of knowledge of ID and potentiality of this segment of the workforce.</li> </ul>

Table 6 includes information from Region 6, Gulf Coast, which contains 13 counties. Of all survey responses, 201 respondents are from Region 6.

**Table 6. SWOT Analysis for Region 6, Gulf Coast**

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nine community colleges</li> <li>• Eight universities</li> <li>• Four LIDDAs</li> <li>• Four Project SEARCH® Sites</li> <li>• One Workforce Development Board</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of standardized approach for OST programs for individuals with IDD in Texas</li> <li>• Lack of availability and funding</li> <li>• No OST program in region</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Houston CC – VAST Academy</li> <li>• Alvin CC – STRIVE program</li> <li>• Expand Project SEARCH® sites for both school-age students and adults</li> <li>• Expand community college OST programs for students with IDD</li> <li>• Urban areas might have increased employment opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A few rural areas with limited access to urban training centers and public transportation</li> <li>• Employer lack of knowledge of IDD and potentiality of this segment of the workforce</li> </ul>

Table 7 includes information from Region 7, Central Texas, which contains 30 counties. Of all survey responses, 142 respondents are from Region 7.

**Table 7. SWOT Analysis for Region 7, Central Texas**

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Six community colleges</li> <li>• Nine universities/colleges</li> <li>• Five LIDDAs</li> <li>• Two OST programs</li> <li>• Nine Project SEARCH® Sites</li> <li>• Five Workforce Development Boards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of standardized approach for OST programs for individuals with IDD in Texas</li> <li>• Lack of availability and funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Texas A&amp;M – PATHS program</li> <li>• UT E4TEXAS program</li> <li>• Expand Project SEARCH® sites for school age students and adults</li> <li>• Expand community college OST programs for students with IDD</li> <li>• Urban areas might have increased employment opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A few rural areas with limited access to urban training centers and public transportation</li> <li>• Employer lack of knowledge of IDD and potentiality of this segment of the workforce</li> </ul>

Table 8 includes information from Region 8, Upper South Texas, which contains 28 counties. Of all survey responses, 148 respondents are from Region 8.

**Table 8. SWOT Analysis for Region 8, Upper South Texas**

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three community colleges</li> <li>• Seven universities/colleges</li> <li>• Two LIDDAs</li> <li>• Two Project SEARCH® Sites</li> <li>• Three Workforce Development Boards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of standardized approach for OST programs for individuals with IDD in Texas</li> <li>• Lack of availability and funding</li> <li>• No OST program in region</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alamo CC – ACCESS program</li> <li>• Expand Project SEARCH® sites for both school-age students and adults</li> <li>• Expand community college OST programs for students with IDD</li> <li>• Urban areas might have increased employment opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rural areas with limited access to urban training centers and public transportation</li> <li>• Employer lack of knowledge of IDD and potentiality of this segment of the workforce</li> <li>• Employment opportunities might be minimal in western area of region</li> </ul>

Table 9 includes information from Region 9, West Texas, which contains 30 counties. Of all survey responses, 20 respondents are from Region 9.

**Table 9. SWOT Analysis for Region 9, West Texas**

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three community colleges</li> <li>• One university/college</li> <li>• Three LIDDAs</li> <li>• Two Workforce Development Boards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of standardized approach for OST programs for individuals with IDD in Texas</li> <li>• Lack of availability and funding</li> <li>• No OST program in region</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand community college OST programs for students with IDD</li> <li>• Expand Project SEARCH® sites for both school-age students and adults</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large rural areas with limited access to urban training centers and public transportation</li> <li>• Employment opportunities might be minimal</li> <li>• Employer lack of knowledge of IDD and potentiality of this segment of the workforce</li> </ul>



Table 10 includes information from Region 10, Upper Rio Grande, which contains 6 counties. Of all survey responses, 71 respondents are from Region 10.

**Table 10. SWOT Analysis for Region 10, Upper Rio Grande**

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One community college</li> <li>• One university</li> <li>• One LIDDA</li> <li>• One OST Program</li> <li>• One Project SEARCH® Site</li> <li>• One Workforce Development Board</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of standardized approach for OST programs for individuals with IDD in Texas</li> <li>• Lack of availability and funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• El Paso CC – HIGHER program</li> <li>• Expand Project SEARCH® sites for both school-age students and adults</li> <li>• Expand community college OST programs for students with IDD</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large rural areas with limited access to urban training centers and public transportation</li> <li>• Employment opportunities might be minimal</li> <li>• Employer lack of knowledge of IDD and potentiality of this segment of the workforce</li> </ul>

Table 11 includes information from Region 11, Lower South Texas, which contains 19 counties. Of all survey responses, 88 respondents are from Region 11.

**Table 11. SWOT Analysis for Region 11, Lower South Texas**

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five community colleges</li> <li>• Four LIDDAs</li> <li>• Four Workforce Development Boards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of standardized approach for OST programs for individuals with IDD in Texas</li> <li>• Lack of availability and funding</li> <li>• No OST program in region</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand Community College OST programs for students with IDD</li> <li>• Expand Project SEARCH® sites for both school-age students and adults</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large rural areas with limited access to urban training centers and public transportation outside of the border counties.</li> <li>• Employment Opportunities might be minimal</li> <li>• Employer lack of knowledge of IDD and potentiality of this segment of the workforce</li> </ul>

## **Appendix C. SWOT Analysis Regionalization**

### **Region 1, High Plains**

Counties: Armstrong, Bailey, Briscoe, Carson, Castro, Childress, Cochran, Collingsworth, Crosby, Dallam, Deaf Smith, Dickens, Donley, Floyd, Garza, Gray, Hale, Hall, Hansford, Hartley, Hemphill, Hockley, Hutchinson, King, Lamb, Lipscomb, Lubbock, Lynn, Moore, Motley, Ochiltrie, Oldham, Parmer, Potter, Randall, Roberts, Sherman, Swisher, Terry, Wheeler, and Yoakum

Community colleges: Amarillo College, Clarendon College, Frank Phillips College, and South Plains College

Universities: Lubbock Christian University, Texas Tech University, and Wayland Baptist University

LIDDAs: Central Plains Center, StarCare Specialty Health System, and Texas Panhandle Centers

Project SEARCH®:

- Covenant Health Hospital, Lubbock, Texas, Lubbock Cooper ISD, Friendship ISD, Levelland ISD, TWS-VRS, and Quest Employment
- Amarillo ISD Administration, Amarillo Texas, Amarillo ISD, TWS-VRS, Quest Employment, HHSC, and Amarillo ISD Administration

Texas Workforce Boards: Workforce Solutions Panhandle and Workforce Solutions South Plains

### **Region 2, Northwest Texas**

Counties: Archer, Baylor, Brown, Callahan, Clay, Coleman, Comanche, Cottle, Eastland, Fisher, Foard, Hardeman, Haskell, Jack, Jones, Kent, Knox, Mitchell, Montague, Nolan, Runnels, Scurry, Shackelford, Stephens, Stonewall, Taylor, Throckmorton, Wichita, Wilbarger, and Young

Community colleges: Cisco College, Ranger College, Vernon College, and Western Texas College

Universities: Abilene Christian University, Hardin-Simmons University, Howard Payne University, McMurry University, and Midwestern State University

LIDDAs: Betty Hardwick Center, Center for Life Resources, and Helen Farabee Centers

Texas Workforce Boards: Workforce Solutions North Texas and Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas

**Region 3, Metroplex**

Counties: Collin, Cooke, Dallas, Denton, Ellis, Erath, Fannin, Grayson, Hood, Hunt, Johnson, Kaufman, Navarro, Palo Pinto, Parker, Rockwall, Somervell, Tarrant, and Wise

Community colleges: Collin College, Dallas County Community College, Grayson College, Navarro College, North Central Texas College, Tarrant County College, and Weatherford College

Universities: Amberton University, Arlington Baptist University, Austin College, Criswell College, Dallas Baptist University, Dallas Christian College, Parker University, Paul Quinn College, Southern Methodist University, Southwestern Adventist University, Southwestern Assemblies of God University, Tarleton State University, Texas Christian University, Texas Wesleyan University, Texas Women’s University, The Kings University, University of Dallas, University of North Texas, and Wade College

LIDDAs: Denton County MHMR Center, Lakes Regional MHMR Center, LifePath Systems, MHMR of Tarrant County, North Texas Behavioral Health Authority (NTBHA), Texoma Community Center, and Pecan Valley Centers for Behavioral & Developmental Healthcare

Project SEARCH®:

- Epiroc, Garland, Texas, Garland ISD, TWS-VRS, and Quest Employment
- City of Garland, Garland Texas, Garland ISD, TWS-VRS, and Quest Employment
- Medical Center of Lewisville, Lewisville Texas, Lewisville ISD, TWS-VRS, and Quest Employment
- The City of Lewisville, Lewisville, Texas, Lewisville ISD, TWS-VRS, and Quest Employment
- Texas Wesleyan University, Fort Worth, Texas, Fort Worth ISD, TWS-VRS, Goodwill Industries of Ft. Worth, and MHMR of Tarrant County
- SanMar, Inc., Irving, Texas, Irving ISD, TWS-VRS, Dallas Metrocare Services
- Embassy Suites Dallas Frisco Conference Center, Frisco, Texas, Frisco ISD, TWS-VRS, and LifePath
- Baylor Scott & White, Plano, Texas, Plano ISD, TWS-VRS, LifePath
- Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital Dallas, Richardson, Texas, Richardson ISD, TWS-VRS, and Quest Employment

Texas Workforce Boards: Workforce Solutions North Central Texas, Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County, Workforce Solutions Greater Dallas, and Workforce Solutions Texoma

#### **Region 4, Upper East Texas**

Counties: Anderson, Bowie, Camp, Cass, Cherokee, Delta, Franklin, Gregg, Harrison, Henderson, Hopkins, Lamar, Marion, Morris, Panola, Rains, Red River, Rusk, Smith, Titus, Upshur, Van Zandt, and Wood

Community colleges: Kilgore College, Northeast Texas Community College, Panola College, Paris Junior College, Texarkana College, Trinity Valley Community College, Tyler Junior College, and Texas College

Universities: East Texas Baptist University, Jarvis Christian College, LeTourneau University, and Wiley College

LIDDAs: ACCESS, Andrews Center Behavioral Healthcare System and Community Healthcare

Project SEARCH®:

- Christus Trinity Mother Frances Hospital, Tyler Texas, Tyler ISD, TWS-VRS, Winning Edge Employment, and Andrews Center

Texas Workforce Boards: Workforce Solutions Texas and Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas

#### **Region 5, Southeast Texas**

Counties: Angelina, Hardin, Houston, Jasper, Jefferson, Nacogdoches, Newton, Orange, Polk, Sabine, San Augustine, San Jacinto, Shelby, Trinity, and Tyler

Community colleges: Angelina College

Universities: Lamar University and Stephen F. Austin State University

LIDDAs: Burke Center and Spindletop Center

Texas Workforce Boards: Workforce Solutions Deep East Texas and Workforce Solutions Southeast Texas

#### **Region 6, Gulf Coast**

Counties: Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Colorado, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Matagorda, Montgomery, Walker, Waller, and Wharton

Community colleges: Alvin Community College, Brazosport College, College of the Mainland, Galveston College, Houston Community College, Lee College, Lone Star College, San Jacinto College, and Wharton County Junior College

Universities: College of Biblical Studies, Houston Baptist University, Prairie View A&M University, Rice University, Sam Houston State University, Texas Southern University, University of Houston, and University of St. Thomas

LIDDAs: Galveston Coast Center, MHMR Authority of Harris County, Texana Center, and Tri-County Services

Project SEARCH®:

- United Healthcare, Sugarland, Texas, Fort Bend ISD, TWS-VRS, and Texana
- Texas Children’s Health Plan, Houston Texas, Houston ISD, and TWS-VRS
- Dow Chemical, Freeport, Texas, Brazosport ISD, TWS-VRS, and SCI
- Dow Chemical, Houston, Texas, Houston ISD, and TWS-VRS

Texas Workforce Board: Workforce Solutions Gulf Coast

### **Region 7, Central Texas**

Counties: Bastrop, Bell, Blanco, Bosque, Brazos, Burleson, Burnet, Caldwell, Coryell, Falls, Fayette, Freestone, Grimes, Hamilton, Hays, Hill, Lampasas, Lee, Leon, Limestone, Llano, Madison, McLennan, Milam, Mills, Robertson, San Saba, Travis, Washington, and Williamson

Community colleges: Austin Community College, Blinn College, Central Texas College, Hill College, McLennan Community College, and Temple College

Universities: Baylor University, Concordia University Texas, Huston-Tillotson University, Southwestern University, St. Edward’s University, Texas A&M University, Texas State University, The University of Texas, and University of Mary Hardin-Baylor

LIDDAs: Austin Travis County Integral Care, Bluebonnet Trails Community Service, Central Counties Services, Heart of Texas Region MHMR Center, and MHMR Authority of Brazos Valley

Occupational Skills Training Programs: Texas A&M PATHS Program and The University of Texas E4Texas Program

Project SEARCH®:

- Seton Medical Center Williamson, Round Rock, Texas, Round Rock ISD, TWS-VRS, Goodwill Industries of Central Texas, and Bluebonnet MHMR
- Seton Northwest, Austin, Texas, Leander ISD, Georgetown ISD, TWS-VRS, Goodwill Industries of Central Texas, and Bluebonnet MHMR
- Baylor Scott & White Hospital, College Station, Texas, College Station ISD, TWS-VRS, Brazos Valley Center for Independent Living, and MHMR of Brazos County
- Baylor Scott & White Hospital, Brenham, Texas, Brenham ISD, TWS-VRS, The Whole Solution, and MHMR of Brazos County
- Dell Seton Medical Center-UT, Austin, Texas, Austin ISD, TWS-VRS, Goodwill of Central Texas, and ATCIC
- Seton Burnet Healthcare Center, Burnet, Texas,
- Liberty Hill ISD, TWS-VRS, Goodwill Central Texas, and Bluebonnet MHMR
- Seton Medical Center Hays, Kyle, Texas, Hays Consolidated ISD, TWS-VRS, Goodwill Industries of Central TX, and Hill Country MHMR
- Hilton Hotel, College Station, Texas, Bryan ISD, TWS-VRS, Brazos Valley Center for Independent Living, and MHMR of Brazos County

Texas Workforce Boards: Workforce Solutions for the Heart of Texas, Workforce Solutions of Central Texas, Workforce Solutions Rural Capital Area, Workforce Solutions Brazos Valley, and Workforce Solutions Capital Area

### **Region 8, Upper South Texas**

Counties: Atascosa, Bandera, Bexar, Calhoun, Comal, DeWitt, Dimmit, Edwards, Frio, Gillespie, Goliad, Gonzales, Guadalupe, Jackson, Karnes, Kendall, Kerr, Kinney, LaSalle, Lavaca, Maverick, Medina, Real, Uvalde, Val Verde, Victoria, Wilson, and Zavala

Community colleges: Alamo College, Southwest Texas Junior College, and Victoria College

Universities: Baptist University of the Americas, Our Lady of the Lake University, Schreiner University, St. Mary's University, Texas Lutheran University, Trinity University, and University of Incarnate Word

LIDDAs: Camino Real Community Services, The Center for Health Care Services, Gulf Bend Center, and Hill Country Mental Health and Developmental Centers

Project SEARCH®:

- La Cantera Hill Country Resort, San Antonio, Texas, San Antonio North ISD, TWS-VRS, and Alamo Local Authority

- Christus Santa Rosa Children’s Hospital, San Antonio Texas, San Antonio ISD, TWS-VRS, and Alamo Local Authority

Texas Workforce Boards: Workforce Solutions Golden Crescent, Workforce Solutions Middle Rio Grande, and Workforce Solutions Alamo

### **Region 9, West Texas**

Counties: Andrews, Borden, Coke, Concho, Crane, Crockett, Dawson, Ector, Gaines, Glasscock, Howard, Irion, Kimble, Loving, Martin, Mason, McCulloch, Menard, Midland, Pecos, Reagan, Reeves, Schleicher, Sterling, Sutton, Terrell, Tom Green, Upton, Ward, and Winkler

Community colleges: Howard College, Midland College, and Odessa College

Universities: Angelo State University

LIDDAs: MHMR Services for the Concho Valley, Permian Basin Community Centers for MHMR, and West Texas Centers

Texas Workforce Boards: Workforce Solutions Concho Valley and Workforce Solutions Permian Basin

### **Region 10, Upper Rio Grande**

Counties: Brewster, Culberson, El Paso, Hudspeth, Jeff Davis, and Presidio

Community colleges: El Paso Community College

Universities: Sul Ross State University

LIDDAs: Emergence Health Network

Occupational Skills Training Programs: El Paso Community College HIGHER Program

Project SEARCH®:

- The Hospitals of Providence, El Paso, Texas, El Paso ISD, TWS-VRS, and Nidia Escobar

Texas Workforce Board: Workforce Solutions Borderplex

### **Region 11, Lower South Texas**

Counties: Aransas, Bee, Brooks, Cameron, Duval, Hidalgo, Jim Hogg, Jim Wells, Kenedy, Kleberg, Live Oak, McMullen, Nueces, Refugio, San Patricio, Starr, Webb, Willacy, and Zapata



Community colleges: Coastal Bend College, Del Mar College, Laredo Community College, South Texas College, and Texas Southmost College

LIDDAs: Border Region Behavioral Health Center, Coastal Plains Community Center, MHMR Center of Nueces County, and Tropical Texas Behavioral Center

Texas Workforce Boards: Workforce Solutions for South Texas, Workforce Solutions Lower Rio Grande Valley, Workforce Solutions of the Coastal Bend, Workforce Solutions Alamo, and Workforce Solutions Cameron

## **Appendix D. External Stakeholder Recommendations**

The external stakeholder workgroup discovered that the biggest challenge for assisting individuals with IDD in finding community-integrated employment is the potential need for well-planned support and assistance. Like anyone else, individuals with IDD need to have a clear idea of the type of job that interests them, consider the work environment that best suits them, and use personal and professional networks to assist in their job search.

Learning soft skills that prepare a person for success in the workplace and in the community, as well as job skills that give a person the needed tools to be successful in performing the tasks of their job, are critical. The workgroup notes that another important factor for consideration is job matching, which is used to find a work environment and job description that best suits the current interest, needed supports, personality, and skills of the applicant with a disability. Examples of good job matching include:

1. A person who is quiet, tends to grow anxious in loud environments, and prefers not to interact with others, gets a job doing filing and other solitary clerical tasks;
2. A person who needs periodic assistance gets a job in an office environment where people work in an open space with a good deal of interaction; and
3. A person with limited physical movements, who uses a wheelchair, gets a job doing data entry. He or she enters data by hooking his or her augmentative communication device (a computerized device through which he “speaks”) into a computer.

External stakeholder recommendations for expansion or improvement of existing programs include:

1. Conducting a third-party study to determine the cost and feasibility to replicate the Texas A&M PATHS program, the UT Center for Disability Study E4Texas program, and the El Paso Community College HIGHER OST programs for individuals with ID resulting in:
  - a. A standardized system throughout the state housed in community colleges and universities with a curriculum funded by TWC and employment development support provided by TWS-VRS and LIDDAs for employment specialists and job coaches; and
  - b. Requiring entities that wish to access available funding to set up an OST program for individuals with ID to use the standardized system;

2. Requesting TWC produce a report on all possible funding sources for OST programs for individuals with IDD;
3. Expanding the definition of a formal OST program to include the training needs of individuals with IDD;
4. Considering conducting a study on a statewide minimum salary for employment specialists that recognizes the professional skills of the position;
5. Providing increased opportunities for Project SEARCH® sites statewide; and
6. Identifying specific occupations within in-demand industries that require a certificate in skills necessary to maintain employment in that position and industry, and that would be plausible for individuals with IDD.

Strategies offered by the external workgroup for placing people in fulfilling jobs using existing or expanded programs include:

1. Providing multiple and discrete employment specialists on staff at the community college, university, Project SEARCH®, and PATHS sites;
2. Continuing to use TWS-VRS for job assessment, discovery, and development for individuals with IDD who are eligible for vocational rehabilitation;
3. Having a dedicated employment specialist for each Project SEARCH® site; and
4. Having a network of regional job coaches responsible for providing extended supports and services to assist individuals in retaining and advancing in employment obtained as a result of participation in an OST programs.