



Connecticut State Department of Education
Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education
Office of Student Supports and Organizational Effectiveness
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Connecticut Narrative Report 2019-20

Introduction

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has successfully completed another year of implementing the goals outlined in its Unified State Plan as mandated by Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The CSDE has enhanced and supported programs and services that are more comprehensive, cost-effective and responsive to community needs by supplementing Connecticut's commitment of state and local adult education dollars with WIOA Title II dollars.

Sixty organizations including school districts, volunteer programs, community based organizations and other agencies provided adult education services in Connecticut by recruiting and retaining educationally and economically disadvantaged adults. By focusing on the needs of learners, families, communities and employers, adult education programs succeeded in improving the skills of Connecticut's learners, enabling thousands of residents to attain a secondary school diploma, helping to close the skills gap in the workplace, assisting non-English speakers to learn English, easing the transition to post-secondary education, preparing residents to attain U.S. citizenship and helping families to break the intergenerational cycle of illiteracy.

The following responses are part of its Narrative Report for Fiscal Year 2019-20.

State Leadership Funds *Describe how the State has used funds made available under section 223 (State Leadership activities) for each of the following required activities:*

- 1) Alignment of adult education and literacy activities with other one-stop required partners to implement the strategies in the Unified or Combined State Plan as described in section 223(1)(a).*
- 2) Establishment or operation of a high quality professional development programs as described in section 223(1)(b).*
- 3) Provision of technical assistance to funded eligible providers as described in section 223(1)(c).*
- 4) Monitoring and evaluation of the quality and improvement of adult education activities as described in section 223(1)(d).*
- 5) As applicable, describe how the State has used funds for additional permissible activities described in section 223(a)(2).*

Professional Development

The CSDE delivers a majority of its state leadership and professional development services through one Regional Education Service Center (RESC), EdAdvance, as part of the Adult Training and Development Network (ATDN). The CSDE's professional development model supports the implementation of the goals of Connecticut's State Plan and consists of professional development basics and activities related to the implementation of College & Career Readiness Standards (CCRS). Professional Development is provided to local programs and services for One-Stop partners and other agencies through ATDN.

During fiscal year 2019-20, the Covid-19 pandemic occurred which created alternative professional development program adjustments. These alternative programs were the results of various school programs operating in remote and/or classroom instruction. Before providing professional development workshops, we had to offer remote learning workshops teaching the use of software platforms like Zoom, Google, WebEx, etc. We operated synchronous and asynchronous workshops to accommodate these programs during the March 2020 to August 2020 program year. In 2019-2020, approximately 1104 practitioners attended 104 pre-planned training sessions, plus conference presentations, CAACE, the Annual Disability conference, NCTN, CONNTESOL and GEDTS conferences. Over ninety-five percent of all workshop evaluations returned were rated four or five on a five-point scale for overall quality. EdAdvance implemented these many varied training sessions, which included a two-day Summer Institute held at the University of New Haven with over 170 workshop participants. Virtual sessions in differing formats, face to face, through web conferencing, or a combination of all were presented throughout the year within these 100+ workshops. We also attempted to offer “mini-institutes” where our presenters visited school sites throughout the state to deliver needed workshops. However, once schools began to close due to Covid-19, we cancelled these institutes and moved many of them to a virtual delivery. Pivoting to online, virtual trainings showed a huge increase in participation by teachers. Not having to travel and the need for training in the different platforms proved positive for ATDN training participation.

Connecticut Competency System (CCS) training sessions were offered several times during the year to practitioners from both adult education and the workforce development community. About 164 teacher/practitioners attended these 6 sessions. The CCS is an integral part of the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS) to connect curriculum, assessment and instruction that is able to capture progress made by adult education learners. CCS has incorporated the College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards for Adult Education into training. Since virtual instruction has been ongoing, we have also added participation in the pre-designed CASAS videos for certification and training. ATDN staff supports the network of CCS Program Facilitators – lead practitioners who ensure high quality CCS implementation – through regional networking sessions that provide updates, links to best practices, opportunities for sharing and an awareness of regional/national issues. ATDN continues to work with the CSDE to host a required statewide meeting for CCS Program Facilitators as well as regional meetings in the fall. We added Data Download and TOPSpro workshops with 30 participants. Currently, CT has two National/State Certified trainers for CCS; one of which has presented for CASAS at their Summer Institute.

GED and the GED® Test - As additional information about the subtests and newer student preparation material became available, instructors eagerly incorporated all of them into their instructional settings. ATDN provided sessions that recognized instructor engagement with the GED Testing Service™ website, and the Official GED® Practice Test, as well as discussion of relevant new materials and resources. Three sessions in *Writing, Math, Science and Social Studies* were offered to 160 participants through EdAdvance’s professional staff. We also supported the Math and ELA areas of the GED which helps teachers find ways to use data across content areas, concentrating on resource sharing and deepening the problems used with students. Additionally, we held a GED Day with 6 offerings in RLA, Science, Math, Social Studies, GED Manager and TOPSpro Reports for approximately 55 instructors. The GED Registrar’s workshops held two sessions with 69 participants. The GED® programs offer an enhanced opportunity for discussion and writing related to career options and pathways for students to continue into either employment and/or further educational situations. We also encouraged teachers to attend the GED Tuesday for Teachers workshops throughout the school year. Two ATDN staff attended the GEDTS Conference.

College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) for Adult Education Three years ago, the CSDE required full implementation of the CCRS for Adult Education which continues to be the focal point for our state’s professional development particularly in reading, writing, and math. ATDN Trainers for English Language Arts (ELA) and Math provided training and review of required completion activities to ensure teachers were able to implement CCRS in their lesson planning. We have actively used our recently developed CCRS 100 Series videos to be used for new instructors or those wanting refresher training. The videos have been very successful during the pandemic, allowing for continued teacher training in CCRS. ELA trainers offered 4 sessions with over 23 participants while the Math trainers conducted about 10 sessions for 61 participants. To date, more than 700 practitioners have completed the ELA series and over 300 practitioners completed the Math series. In addition, several sessions were presented at CAACE (the state adult education conference) in both reading and math. Additionally, we have been training presenters in the CCRS Advance Series (our

201,202, 203 & 204) in cooperation with SABES staff in Boston. Our focus for the upcoming year continues to be offered in two ELA 201 & 202 workshops and two Math 201 & 202 workshops to continue the 200 series of CCRS.

Teacher Evaluation Required by the CSDE in 2017, an evaluation plan was implemented in order to create a consistency of expectations and accountability across adult education programs. This program is modeled after the CT SEED Model used in the K-12 field but focuses solely on the Teacher Performance & Practice components of SEED and observations on Learning Environment and Instruction domains from the Common Core of Teaching rubric. It uses a holistic approach to rating rather than SEED's 4 weighted components and has much greater flexibility in the type and number of observations and reviews of practice. In order to accomplish this program, all adult education directors (092 certification required) and/or evaluators are required to attend 2 of 9 workshops modified on the CSDE Foundational Skills for Evaluators of Teachers. One workshop, called Adopting Evaluation for Adult Education Professionals is the plan overview and orientation. The second workshop, Effective Feedback for Adult Education Instruction focused on data collection, matching data to the rubric and providing high quality feedback. Certifications were issued to 23 administrators that successfully completed both workshops during the year. Currently, the Governor of CT has temporarily suspended the requirement for teacher evaluation during this Covid-19 pandemic. However, over 150 participants have completed these trainings. Follow up session workshops on Evaluators in Calibration, communications and the evaluation process review continue to be offered. These include Communicating about Evaluation to Staff and Rating Calibration Practice. A teacher evaluation Roundtable was offered for 7 administrators who wanted to share ideas, materials, processes for this evaluation system. Plans to develop Zoom trainings and videos in Teacher Evaluation are currently in production.

Technical Trainings to practitioners were crucial during our pandemic trainings in the proper use of remote/distance learning as well as tech platforms like WebEx, Zoom and others were developed to help instructors be successful should the need be there. We provided targeted trainings on relevant topics in digital literacy which provide basic skills in digital literacy for instructors, technology integration, and coding as a problem solving solution. An ATDN webpage was established to house and support the many adult education offerings and resources including Powerpoint presentations, videos, webinars and workshop materials throughout the year. Materials from presenters after our annual conference(s) are also maintained there for all field personnel to access at any time. We have set up a Schoology site for practitioners as a communication tool for the field and have created more than 8 Schoology program group codes for easy access. In February, a Digital Learning Day was cancelled due to low enrollment. But, there were 5 separate technology based workshops attended by 388 participants. Additionally, one of our presenters delivered 2 Smartphone workshops. Plans to use a learning management system called Canvas is also being developed for use by educators and students.

English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) and IELCE teachers were provided multiple professional development opportunities for all levels of ESL instruction. IELCE teachers met to discuss how they have integrated Workforce Readiness and preparation into classes and shared lessons around work readiness. Continuing the emphasis on ELP in Adult Education, a TPR workshop and one *Using CCRS in the ESL Classroom* was offered for 11 participants. Two ESL Days were offered for 121 participants (64 and 57) with an overview of the ELP Standards along with the standards for advanced users. A Civics workshop offered participants some new ways to incorporate civics into their classes. A virtual Early Childhood & Elementary Support to ESL Parents was held for 25 participants. An ATDN presenter attended the CONNTESOL Conference in the fall.

The **NEDP** Center continues to provide training and technical assistance to the all of Connecticut's National External Diploma sites on an as-needed basis, as well as providing portfolio review for newly trained NEDP staff. The NEDP Team developed a revised approach to training due to the Corona virus with support and expertise in the education field. An Evaluation Workshop was held in October with six participants. One three-day NEDP New Advisor/Assessor Training was held for 10 participants. NEDP Refresher and NEDP Evaluation sessions were held. The NEDP Center has reviewed and provided feedback to CASAS regarding program research and development of program changes. In total, approximately 21 NEDP practitioners attended these sessions. The new Advisor/Assessor training is being developed using Canvas learning platform and will be delivered completely online.

Workforce Development and Career Pathways regional forums/meeting on topics relevant to Adult Education were held at some of the Workforce Development Board sites. The sessions had over 100 participants.

The **27th Annual Conference on Serving Adults with Disability** was held at a conference center for about 240 educators. Six workshops were offered in areas of Students on the Autism Spectrum: Transitioning to Post Secondary Ed & Employment, Executive Functioning Deficits, Creating a movement for Workplaces, along with Adult Ed pathways.

The ATDN staff developed and presented to 28 adult educators, two workshops, “Boundaries: Ethical Work in Adult Education” and “Recognizing Disability in ELL Learners.” Disability Contact Persons trainings were held in November for new and experienced disability contacts, totaling over 62 participants. Consultations with Adult Ed and Literacy programs occurred at the rate of several per month around the state.

Describe how the State has used funds for additional permissible activities:

New England Literacy Resource Center (NELRC): Connecticut is a member of the NELRC board which meets three times per year with other New England states. The Board is made up of the State Adult Education Director, Professional Development staff, local program providers and teachers. Each state has 4 members. NELRC offers each state customized regional professional development, from webinars to intensive initiatives, based on NELRC board priorities; cross-state collaboration and sharing about practice and policy through board meetings and quarterly meetings of the professional developers, and free online access to *The Change Agent* magazine, teaching resources, and archives for all adult educators in our state. Several of our adult education students were published. The membership in NELRC has been invaluable in FY 2019-20 because of two major national events: the Census and the Presidential Election. CT participated in sessions about the Census and the Voter Education and Registration Action (VERA) project.

ATDN provides assistance to local programs in technology applications, including professional development to support the use of instructional technology. Training and technology assistance to local programs in technology applications, especially in the area of web based communications are provided as well as assistance in finding access to computers. The ATDN webpage provides a resource page for all of our professional development workshops and events that can be accessed. This has helped many educators during this Covid-19 period.

We support activities for the integration of literacy and English language instruction with occupational skill training (IEL), including promoting linkages with employers. Local programs can be assisted by sharing effective models, assisting local programs in engaging employers and how to partner successfully with other agencies to place students in employment.

Standards and academic requirements for enrollment in non-remedial, for credit courses in post-secondary educational institutions or institutions of higher education are supported by the State. Training staff on learning styles and needs, facilitating adult learning, planning for instruction and monitoring student progress is ongoing.

We continue to provide professional development to local programs for improved program quality. Training is designed to improve instruction in the essential components of reading, instruction related to specific needs of adult learners, instruction provided by volunteers or paid personnel and the dissemination of information about models and promising practices. Participants are asked to evaluate the training sessions to determine if the sessions fit their needs. This is done both manually and electronically. Changes are made to future workshops based on the evaluations completed.

Looking forward to 2021, we hope to hire, through ATDN, a statewide distance learning coordinator to support our local providers with technical assistance and professional development specific to technology related topics.

Performance Data Analyses *Describe how the adult education program performed in the overall assessment of core programs based on the core indicators of performance. Discuss how the assessment was used to improve quality and effectiveness of the funded eligible providers and any plans to further increase performance in future reporting years.*

Number of Students Enrolled: The total number of students enrolled in fiscal year 2019-20 declined from the previous year with all age cohorts dropping off. The following chart shows our performance from FY 2018, FY 2019 and FY 2020. This shows there were gains made overall in both the ABE levels and ESL levels from FY 2018 to FY 2019 but substantially decreased in 2019-20. These numbers can be attributed to the sudden school closures in March which continued through the end of the fiscal year. Remote proctored testing was difficult as it began late in the fiscal year as programs were concluding. Connecticut has been e-testing for several years. The Covid Pandemic has led to increased interest in and more providers wanting to use e-tests in the coming year.

MEASURE ABE/GED	2017-18 PERFORMANCE	2018-19 PERFORMANCE	2019-20 PERFORMANCE
Level 1	43%	51%	26%
Level 2	54%	40%	37%
Level 3	48%	35%	35%
Level 4	31%	38%	27%
Level 5	38%	32%	15%
Level 6	26%	48%	17%
MEASURE ESL	2017-18 PERFORMANCE	2018-19 PERFORMANCE	2019-20 PERFORMANCE
ESL Beginning Literacy	63%	51%	42%
ESL Low Beginning	60%	60%	39%
ESL High Beginning	54%	55%	36%
ESL Low Intermediate	44%	44%	28%
ESL High Intermediate	45%	43%	31%
ESL Advanced	22%	23%	12%

Percentage of Unemployed Learners

The Unemployment rate in Connecticut went from 7.8% in September to 6.1% in October up significantly from 3.6% the previous year. Connecticut economists estimate the real unemployment rate is around 11%. Connecticut's minimum wage is \$12.00 per hour. In the chart below, the percent of learners based on employment status at entry has remained consistent. This could be attributed to those who enrolled before the Covid shutdown.

Percent of Learners Based on Employment Status at Entry

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Employed	41%	42%	42%
Unemployed - Seeking Employment	36%	34%	34%
Unemployed - Not Seeking Employment	23%	24%	21%

Integration with One-stop Partners

Describe how the State eligible agency, as the entity responsible for meeting one-stop requirements under 34 CFR part 463, subpart J, carries out or delegates its required one-stop roles to eligible providers. Describe the applicable career services that are provided in the onestop system. Describe how infrastructure costs are supported through State and local options.

WIOA Title II funds enabled the CSDE to effectively supplement Connecticut's legislatively mandated adult education system. Adult education providers were able to offer more comprehensive and cost-effective services to their eligible residents and expand their network to offer more locally responsive programming. Collaborative relationships have been

developed between the CSDE, local adult education providers, community colleges, community based organizations, other state agencies and the workforce development system to greatly expand educational, support and training services to the target populations in the state. CSDE staff and local practitioners also worked closely with regional literacy councils to strengthen the connections between CSDE funded adult education programs and other literacy related programs in the community. Overall, providers receiving WIOA Title II grants demonstrated strong learner outcomes on the core indicators of performance.

Some notable accomplishments included the following:

- National External Diploma Program (NEDP) expansion enabled providers to offer another high school completion option for adult learners and/or expand the program further into their region.
- Non-traditional adult education services grants promoted quality and increased accessibility to adult education programs for learners in halfway houses, homeless shelters and in work release programs needing ABE/GED instruction as well as ESL instruction.
- Family literacy grants integrated parent literacy training leading to economic self-sufficiency; appropriate education for children; training for parents regarding how to be the primary teachers and full partners in the education of their children; and interactive literacy activities between parents and children. Funds were used to support the adult education component in order to provide basic skills and ESL in an integrated learning environment. During the full school shutdown, while children were attending classes remotely, some adult education teachers were helping them along with their parents. And the inverse of that, children were helping their parents with the technology as they all learned how to use devices and learn at home.
- The Connecticut Adult Virtual High School (CTAVHS) continued to facilitate greater coordination among adult education programs and increased access to learning opportunities by offering high quality mentored online courses taught by state certified instructors to learners statewide.

The CSDE continued to design three priority areas through its federally funded competitive grants to adult education providers specifically focused on critical aspects of career pathways for adult students: Workforce Readiness, Post-secondary Education and Training and Integrated Education and Training (IET).

- Workforce grantees integrated career readiness activities including career portfolios, resume workshops, computer proficiency checklists, skill certification courses and community service experiences into their adult education programming. Students were exposed to labor market information, visited one-stop centers and learned about career pathways as part of their contextualized classroom instruction..
- Transition to Post-secondary Education and Training grantees bridged the “transition gap” by raising students’ standards/expectations, partnered with higher education institutions, aligned curricula, coached learners about postsecondary options and targeted instructional strategies to help them transition successfully to post-secondary education/training programs. Transition programs also featured written agreements between the adult education provider and its post-secondary partner(s) and a solid referral and support process.
- The Integrated Education and Training (IET) grantees provided specific career pathways for adult students by utilizing a co-teaching model that included basic education/diploma attainment and training in a specific skill that led to an industry recognized credential. Some examples include Certified Nursing Assistant, Culinary Arts, and Advanced Manufacturing. In most cases, these have occurred virtually due to Covid. In others, clinical practices were delayed.

CSDE provided continuation grants for Title II funds in the spring of 2020. The Program Enhancement Projects’ (PEP) priority areas provide funding opportunities for adult education providers to offer programs and services for adults who lack the level of basic skills and literacy necessary for effective citizenship and productive employment and to build a comprehensive continuum of lifelong learning.

Collaborations with Workforce Development Boards (WDB), One-Stop Centers, the Connecticut Department of Labor and the Department of Rehabilitation Services.

In fiscal year 2019-20, the CSDE provided direct and equitable distribution of financial support to all one-stop centers for infrastructure costs in the amount of \$78,688 (1.5% of the state’s total federal allotment). These funds are awarded by the State Department of Education to support the local providers’ presence in their respective One-Stop Centers. Memoranda of Understanding with Infrastructure Funding Agreements (IFA) are in place with each area Workforce Development Board (WDB) regarding the roles and responsibilities of adult education as its partner. As part of our continuing collaboration, the CSDE has continued to ensure that its needs assessment process aligns with the service delivery goals and objectives of each WDB as a means of enhancing adult education service delivery strategies. The CSDE continues to

offer staff of all the one-stop centers the training, technical assistance and assessment materials necessary to utilize CASAS appraisals and computer-based CASAS testing to gauge customers' literacy skills during the intake process. During 2019-20, guided by new administration in place at the Department of Labor (DOL), current CASAS tests were not utilized. DOL administration chose to use expired CASAS Life and Work tests. Since Covid, there is now interest in using the correct tests which are the only ones that can be used for e-testing.

The CSDE has been working collaboratively with the State Workforce Development Board, newly formed and named the Governor's Workforce Council, to ensure that career pathways development is connected with labor market needs and reflective of the certificate and credit-bearing courses offered at Connecticut's twelve community colleges. The employment outcomes achieved by adult education learners are reported alongside those from higher education and employment and training programs, thus providing greater visibility and credibility on the impact of adult education in Connecticut.

CSDE staff members served on all five local workforce development boards and subcommittees as appointed. The CSDE remains committed to strengthening connections among adult education, social service organizations and the workforce system.

Twenty-five adult education providers have a Workforce Readiness grant. Some of the activities included trips to the local One-Stops and participation in career fairs. In some cases, the staff from the One-Stops do sessions in resume writing, career search, and mock job interviews at the program's site. Many providers are members of their local Chambers of Commerce.

Connecticut has had a long-standing Disability Focus Group (DFG) whose membership includes staff from the Department of Labor, the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and the Department of Education. We have an annual Disabilities Conference which is supported financially and morally by those agencies. In addition, the DFG assists with developing professional development sessions involving disabilities in adult education. This past year, CSDE participated in a virtual Disabilities Resource Fair coordinated by the Hartford American Job Center.

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) Program (AEFLA Section 243)

Describe how the state is using funds under Section 243 to support the following activities under the IELCE program:

1. *Describe when your State held a competition [the latest competition] for IELCE program funds and the number of grants awarded by your State to support IELCE programs.*
2. *Describe your State efforts in meeting the requirement to provide IELCE services in combination with integrated education and training activities;*
3. *Describe how the State is progressing towards program goals of preparing and placing IELCE program participants in unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency as described in section 243(c)(1) and discuss any performance results, challenges, and lessons learned from implementing those program goals; and*
4. *Describe how the State is progressing towards program goals of ensuring that IELCE program activities are integrated with the local workforce development system and its functions as described in section 243(c)(2) and discuss any performance results, challenges, and lessons learned from implementing those program goals.*

A grant continuation was held in the spring of 2020 and twenty-one grants were awarded for IELCE projects. We have continued to provide our own professional development by bringing all 21 grantees together to focus on the guide for IELCE programs. In addition, CSDE has held technical assistance visits and done observations at most programs. In

FY19-20, the visits would have been completed except for two due to the school closures in the spring. One of our planned grantees' meetings was postponed due to Covid.

In our continuation application for the federal grant, the following requirements were included in the Integrated English Literacy/Civics Education (IEL/Civics) priority area for funding:

- A. Program design and goals that focus on preparing adults for employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency;
- B. Curriculum focus on skills that will provide information and support in the skills necessary for the workplace;
- C. Coordination with the local workforce system;
- D. Activities provided in combination with integrated education/training (IET) activities

In addition to the requirements listed above, the grantees utilized these resources to improve literacy skills including speaking, reading, writing and numeracy for immigrants and other limited English proficient populations and to provide contextualized instruction in civics education. Approximately 1100 individuals learned about the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, naturalization procedures, civic participation and U.S. history and government. Program outcomes included increases in learners' mean gains in program year-end reports, the development of functional language abilities in receptive and expressive oral and written English, improvement in numeracy/computation skills and a growing competence in idiomatic speech. Instruction pivoted to virtual delivery via Zoom, What's App and Burlington English.

Some program activities directly related to the use of these funds included:

- participation in career pathways exploration and activities such as visits to different businesses and presentations from American Job Center staff that impacted competence in the workplace;
- utilization of various technologies including tablets, smart phones, I Pads, Microsoft Office, Internet, Nearpod, Google and Schoology,;
- integration of English Language Proficiency Standards into curriculum;
- integration of workplace language and conversation practice;
- visits to the local American Job Centers and participation in Career Fairs;
- knowledge of the American education system with special focus on addressing the needs of families new to the U.S. school system;
- collaborations with local libraries;
- cross cultural perspectives, civic responsibility, democracy topics and community projects; and
- attainment of industry recognized certificates in Customer Service, different medical areas including CNA, and ServSafe Food Handler

Adult Education Standards

If your State has adopted new challenging K-12 standards under title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended, describe how your Adult Education content standards are aligned with those K-12 standards.

Due to the GED test and the NEDP being aligned to College and Career Standards (CCRS), and after several years of research, SDE recognized the need to support a set of standards relevant to adult learners. The integration of CCRS into adult education programs is intended to provide all adult students with the opportunity to be prepared for postsecondary training without needing remediation. CT was selected to be part of OCTAE's CCRS Technical Assistance project. With our coaches, we developed a sustainability plan and required full implementation of the CCRS by July 1, 2017.

CSDE has required all adult education teachers to participate in the CCRS training. We expect providers to identify "lead" teachers to expand and sustain this effort within their programs. This will also help programs who have a turnover of teachers to keep the new ones informed of the CCRS. Training videos were developed to assist teachers with limited scheduling ability for face to face trainings. When the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) were released, CT trainers delivered face to face trainings. Additionally, ELPS training videos were developed and offered to teachers. Since the loss of both of our ELA trainers, we have reached out to a trainer from Massachusetts' SABES to assist us with continuing current training and "train the trainer" sessions to seek new CCRS ELA trainers in 2020.

To enhance and support the CCRS implementation effort, CSDE had formed an advisory group for implementation of the CCRS. This group was formed and met just before the Covid shutdown. Action steps were not carried out due to sudden shutdown of classes from Covid. CSDE's adult education unit and ATDN have done outreach to stakeholders such as CAACE (CT Adult and Continuing Education Association), NELRC (New England Literacy Resource Center), the RESC which supports the delivery of CT's professional development system as well as to content curriculum specialists at CSDE. Evaluation consists of ongoing technical assistance from trainers and CSDE which include trainers' observations, submissions of documents, participating in webinars, postings in Schoology, presentations at meetings, and contributions to the learning resource library.

Secondary School Credentials and Equivalencies

Connecticut Adult Education offers three distinct pathways for adults to attain a high school diploma.

Adult High School Credit Diploma (AHSCD):

The Adult High School Credit Diploma program is a prescribed plan, process and structure for earning a required number of academic and elective credits. The provider must be a local education agency (LEA) or Regional Education Service Center (RESC). An adult who successfully completes the required credits of the AHSCD program is awarded a high school diploma by the providing LEA or RESC.

Credits toward a local diploma must be obtained through a prescribed plan that requires a minimum of 20 credits in academic and elective areas. Credits for work or military experience, independent study projects and online courses are additional ways to obtain credit. Also, CSDE offers an Adult Virtual High School (AVHS) program which provides a collaborative statewide system that delivers supplemental online courses aligned with the College and Career Readiness Standards for students enrolled in a CT Adult Education Center's AHSCD or GED program. Online courseware are taught by CT certified teachers with a web-based tutoring service and a seven day help desk. The program operates from July to June and is sustained by an established infrastructure and management team with trained and experienced teachers and mentors. Each provider/town can enhance the basic AHSCD program but must adhere to the minimum state requirements: 1) use certified teachers and counselors; 2) adhere to State Department of Education requirements regarding assessment, enrollment, and accountability and reporting; 3) meet required credit standards; and 4) ensure that a one credit course offers a minimum of 48 instructional hours.

Credits are required to be distributed as follows:

- 4 English
- 3 Social Studies (including 1 credit in US/American History and half credit in Civics/Government)
- 3 Math
- 2 Science
- 1 Arts/Vocational Education
- 7 Electives

National External Diploma Program (NEDP):

The NEDP is a web-based applied performance assessment program that assesses the high school level skills of adults and out-of-school youth. The NEDP evaluates the reading, writing, math and workforce readiness skills of participants in life and work contexts. It is aligned with the College and Career Readiness Standards and evaluates competencies in ten content areas including Financial Literacy, Health Literacy, Civic Literacy, Geography, History, Science, and Twenty-First Century Workplace. An adult who successfully completes all components of the assessment, as required, is awarded a local high school diploma by the providing LEA or RESC. When programs were closed in the spring due to Covid, CASAS piloted the remote delivery of the NEDP. This pilot was successful and enabled learners to complete their work and earn their diplomas. CASAS now has added the option of a fully remote delivery along with face to face.

General Educational Development (GED):

Adults who have not completed high school must demonstrate the attainment of academic skills and concepts normally acquired through completion of a high school program. They do this through the GED examination that includes four subject-area modules: Reasoning through Language Arts (RLA), Mathematical Reasoning, Science, and Social Studies.

The test is also aligned with the College and Career Readiness Standards and measures both high school equivalency as well as readiness for career and college. Applicants for this examination must be at least 17 years of age and officially withdrawn from school for at least six months. Individuals who pass the GED Tests are awarded a Connecticut State High School Diploma. GED instructional programs, provided throughout the state in local school districts and a variety of other instructional sites, help individuals to prepare for this rigorous examination. When the Covid shutdown began, Connecticut initially piloted GED online testing for students who had completed and passed 2 of 4 tests. Students needed to be 18 and older and had to have a GED Ready “Green” Likely-to-Pass score on the subject tests within the past 60 days. At that time, extra time was the only accommodation that was able to be fulfilled virtually. Students who were eligible received an alert in their GED.com student account. Test-takers were required to have a laptop or computer with a camera/microphone, a stable internet connection and a closed, private/quiet room.

Programs for Corrections Education and the Education of Other Institutionalized Individuals (AEFLA Section 225)

What was the relative rate of recidivism for criminal offenders served? Please describe the methods and factors used in calculating the rate for this reporting period.

The Office of Policy and Management (OPM) in the state is responsible for producing annual recidivism studies of offenders released from prisons in Connecticut. In recent years, the Connecticut Department of Correction (DOC) has been in discussion with OPM to develop a methodology to calculate relative recidivism of offenders who participated in education programs against those that did not. A number of practical considerations have side-lined these efforts. With major budget cuts, some Corrections’ facilities have been closed, leadership has changed and staff has been reduced. Due to these factors, CSDE has not collected that information and the state DOC has not been able to calculate the recidivism rate in relationship to education. However, OPM assured us that they hope to work with us in the near term to satisfy the request for data related to recidivism outcomes.

During the 2019-2020 school-year, the enrollment of students decreased significantly. With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Corrections released many citizens early to provide safer environments for those who were serving lengthy sentences. Class sizes have been reduced based on the overall DOC population. For several months in 2020, DOC moved to a remote learning model where assignments were delivered to students who were not allowed to attend school in the traditional setting due to the pandemic. Apart from a few days, education was not interrupted. When facilities re-opened, allowing for non-restrictive movement, in-person classes resumed. Currently, several facilities are working on internet wiring, which will assist in teachers being able to virtually connect with their students if facility infections lead to the need for remote learning in the future.

Annual Narrative Report Summary

In the fall of 2019, Connecticut Adult Education programs came together on the historical New Haven Green for a statewide rally to encourage enrollment in adult education. The rally brought students and staff together and received news coverage from all the local TV stations. Although many of CT programs had been using technology before the Covid pandemic, there were still many challenges when schools were abruptly closed. Teachers who were not comfortable with technology had to quickly learn ways to engage students. Students who had only used technology at the physical site had to access devices and internet at home. There were so many webinars and resources being shared across the country and CSDE with ATDN took advantage of them to share with program providers. CARES ACT funding was accessed only sporadically throughout the state. Adult education programs were encouraged by SDE to request support for adult education in their districts through purchase of computers and other devices.

During fiscal year 2019-20, Connecticut expended \$39,174,173 in state/local and \$4,611,284 in federal funds to serve 16,660 individuals for an average per pupil cost of \$2,628. By augmenting state and local dollars with federal dollars, Connecticut has successfully assisted adults in achieving their educational goals, obtaining or advancing in their jobs, entering post-secondary education, becoming technologically literate and participating more fully as family and community members. The CSDE will continue its efforts to collaborate with our partners to ensure coordination of effort, increased accountability, maintenance of the highest standards and program access for those individuals in need of adult education services in Connecticut.