**Indiana Narrative Report 2019**

In Program Year 2019-2020 (PY 2019), the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (IDWD) was on its way toward continuous improvement through improved student outcomes and a continued focus on innovative models of instruction and effective professional development *until* March 2020. Because of the pandemic, local programs shuttered in-person classes and moved to virtual and other instructional platforms. Despite COVID, the Indiana goal never changed – a vision of adult education programming that leads to successful career pathways, postsecondary transitions, and employment.

**State Leadership Funds (AEFLA Section 223)**

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

* *Alignment of adult 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(l)(a).*

Since moving from IDOE to IDWD, Indiana Adult Education has worked to align adult education and literacy activities with those provided by the one-stop system. WIOA allowed this work to deepen and expand to include additional partners. The pandemic provided additional incentives to this work.

In the spring of 2018, Governor Eric Holcomb signed Senate Enrolled Act 50 into law. This law moved state workforce board authority from the State Workforce Investment Council (SWIC) to the Governor’s Workforce Cabinet (GWC). The legislation charged the GWC with reviewing each workforce related program. As a result of this review state funding for certifications within Adult Education, WorkINdiana was reduced from 5 million to 4 million beginning in PY 19. Due to legislative changes and the pandemic budget shortfalls almost no WorkINdiana training was implemented in PY 19 and all but $150,000 is being returned for PY 20. The original $4 million was moved to the Next Level Jobs Workforce Ready Grant, a program that requires participants to have a high school diploma. After much advocacy work $700,000 was allocated for use by adult education students who were working towards a CDL or CNA credential. Most of these funds were expended prior to the pandemic, but overall dollars for training of adult education participants was significantly reduced for PY 19. Additionally, these changes reduced the level of co-enrollments between Title 1 and Title II. Leadership acknowledged these funding and enrollment issues and allowed the use of CARES Act funding for training of individuals without a secondary credential when co enrolled in Title II beginning July 1, 2020.

Alignment work continues around the delivery of employment and training services and development of career pathways using state and federal funding. Career and Technical Education (CTE) was moved from the Department of Education to the GWC in 2019. A complete rebuild of the CTE system included the development of Next Level Programs of Study. It was Recently announced that the Office of Work Based Learning and Apprenticeships (OWBLA) will also transition to the GWC. As a member of the workforce system adult education will continue to partner with both CTE and OWBLA to align IET and Workforce Education Initiative (WEI) programming across the education continuum.

To further alignment within the workforce system, Indiana is working on two projects. The first is the IN Needs Assessment Training Project. This assessment includes WIOA Title I, II, III & IV, Perkins CTE, TANF/SNAP, Economic Development, K-12 and Post-Secondary providers in Indiana. The assessment will identify partners familiarity with other workforce partners and inform the development of systemwide workforce orientation training. The second project is the Virtual Client Engagement (VCE) tool. VCE is being created in the state agency wide Microsoft Teams portal and will connect the public virtually with workforce service providers. This system will allow for online scheduling of appointments, appointments themselves, document upload and download and completion of required applications and signatures. Additional phases of this project will include automated referrals to workforce partners and connectivity to data management systems. Built on a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) base this tool is currently being used by WIOA Business Service team, and the Workforce Ready Grant team. Modules are in development to add OWBLA to provide connectivity with employer and training providers. The system is currently piloting in three workforce regions with role out to remaining regions and adult education providers in early 2021.

* *Establishment or operation of a high-quality professional development program as described in section 223(1)(b).*

Despite a pandemic, Indiana offered high quality professional development in PY 2019 through new and existing initiatives. Adult educators had more online options than ever before as well as professional development conferences to fulfill the Indiana requirement of 10 hours of professional development for all instructors teaching over nine hours a week.

A strategic plan for professional development was developed earlier to target and improve measurable skill gains and improve completion rates for PY 2019. The delivery system covered four pillars – Professional Development Facilitator (PDF) Network; Basics and More; Struggling (Low Performing) Programs; and Professional Development Federal Initiatives.

Several activities were representative of a high-quality professional development program as described under State Leadership Activities.

► **Professional Development Staff** – Two full time, state-level adult education coordinators (AECs) were employed to serve as professional development leads representing 12-workforce regions of the state.

The professional development team advanced a strategic plan to target four areas –

(1) Develop a yearly **professional development plan** to target focused instruction for low to mid-level skill gainsin reading, writing, and mathematics integrated with employability and workforce prep skills;

(2) Support a **Professional Development Facilitator (PDF) Network** to further expand local and regional professional development targeting individual program needs based on data analysis;

(3) Designate a professional development lead and AECs to work with struggling and **low performing programs** to increase performance that was aligned more closely to federal and/or state benchmarks; and

(4) Utilize content experts to design and deliver **targeted professional development** in priority areas.

Meanwhile, the professional development team identified underperforming programs using performance data; a systematic approach followed to address gaps. Moreover, the team consulted with PDFs and adult education directors to design and construct **professional development plans** that pinpointed specific PD needs based on NRS Table 4 results.

In March, COVID closed physical doors for most adult education programs as local providers scrambled to find ways to serve students virtually. Prior to closure, Indiana was on its way to exceeding performance targets from the year before. The state office instituted a mid-year incentive for programs meeting specific performance metrics. The targets were 50 percent on NRS Table 4, Column I, and 15 percent of ABE adult education enrollments attaining an HSE on NRS Table 4, Column E, by December 31, 2019.

Because of the mid-year incentive, the strong showing in performance for the first nine months buffered the negative impact of the last quarter of the program year.

**► Professional Development Facilitator (PDF) Network –** A network of the best-performing instructors in each program (approximately 30) were recommended and selected for the new program year to coordinate and provide just-in-time training locally and regionally, and to provide professional development planning and mentoring.

In order to be selected as a PDF, candidates were required to possess adult education teaching experience; demonstrated performance in the adult education classroom on NRS tables 4 and 5; schedule flexibility – approximately five hours a month; and knowledge of career awareness and workforce preparation activities.

Instructors received ongoing training to deliver the highest quality professional development both locally and regionally, all of which were directly tied to federal and/or state performance measures. Candidates who applied were recommended by their supervisor; final selections were made by the state professional team each year. (PDFs in the previous program year must reapply each year.)

In PY 2019, the professional development team hosted two state meetings to bring together all PDFs to discuss performance goals, instructional strategies, and promising practices.

► **Evidence-Based Reading** – In the previous year, the professional development team procured a vendor that offered a robust statewide training for evidence-based reading. The training emphasized a process for teaching reading in the adult education multi-level classroom, and incorporated evidence-based practice and the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS). Sessions explored teaching strategies that were shown to be successful in improving reading achievement demonstrated in two ways – (1) by research-study data collected according to rigorous design, and (2) by consensus among expert practitioners who monitored outcomes as part of their practice, for each component of the reading process.

► **Teaching Struggling Learners with Difficulties/Disabilities** – To augment evidence-based reading, this training – Teaching Struggling Learners with Difficulties/Disabilities – helped teachers understand and identify cognitive and processing issues that affect learning. Included were various types of disabilities and impairments; along with teaching strategies, resources, and accommodations that are effective for struggling learners.

► **Integrated Employment and Training**/**Workforce Education Initiative Training –** This training was provided “live” in the previous year and is currently online. It provided Indiana adult education teachers and directors information on how to develop curriculum to meet employer’s needs through partnerships. The vendor designed and delivered three presentations statewide; one was a recorded webinar which allowed adult education teachers to better understand workforce development needs and to develop curriculum to meet specific employer requirements for a productive workforce.

► **New Teacher Training –** Thisin-person training took place in February and provided information and resources that helped participants teach effectively in the adult education classroom. The target was new adult education teachers (those who have taught in adult education less than three years). The onboarding training was aligned with the Indiana Adult Education Teacher’s Handbook. Objectives included applying principles of effective teaching; implementation of student retention strategies; development of more effective and efficient lesson and unit plans; intake and assessment; goal setting and the National Reporting System (NRS); and an overview of state-specific policies and procedures. A train-the-training webinar was recorded and made available on the state’s website the previous year.

**► Online Teaching with a Purpose –** As the pandemic began and physical doors closed, an experienced online adult education teacher worked with the state’s professional development team to produce a **four-part webinar** series to assist teachers who were struggling instructionally with a new virtual world. The series covered basics of online teaching; online lesson planning; keeping students informed; and setting up a workspace. The series was enthusiastically received by teachers who were struggling to navigate new learning platforms from their homes. To accompany the webinars, a cheat sheet – **10 Promising Practices for Online Teaching** – was developed to assist adult educators.

► **Successful Online Test Proctoring** – In addition to state guidance, two local programs, in coordination with the professional team, produced simple step-by-step guides for successful online test proctoring with TABE 11/12.

► **Personally Identified Information (PII)** | [**Guidelines to Assist Indiana Adult Education Programs**](https://www.in.gov/dwd/files/Personally_Identified_Information_Indiana_Adult_Education.pdf) **–** Given the sensitivity and volume of online data, the professional team developed guidelines to assist local programs with personally identified information. The document provided procedures to protect student information and protocols for remote data collection.

**► Coping with the Pandemic –** Materialswere developed, compiled, and posted online by the professional development team to assist programs with the pandemic. A program listing was created to let the public know that adult education’s virtual doors were open. Free online learning opportunities were compiled and distributed to assist learners. State staff waived the 60-day time limit policy to allow examinees more time to complete all five HSE subtests. Learner registration forms were updated to allow students to digitally sign. The same was done for the state exit interview form for any 16- and 17-year-old who desired to drop out of school.

► **Statewide Webinars** – The state office held monthly webinars for adult education providers. As the pandemic continued, an emphasis on topics related to e-learning were covered and modeled, including provisional placement, remote proctoring, and online instruction. Promising practices were highlighted.

► **TESOL Training –** In coordination with the Immigrant Welcome Center, a training was made available to ELL instructors to help develop empathy and understanding around the process of learning to read as an adult. Also, teachers learned specific techniques for scaffolding instruction and discovered best practices for engaging and supporting literacy development. They were able to try out recommendations for providing differentiated instruction in a multilevel classroom.

**► 2020 Spring IAACE Conference** – In the past, IDWD normally partners with the Indiana Association of Adult and Continuing Education (IAACE) each year to offer a variety of professional development opportunities at its annual conference, but the conference was **cancelled** due to the pandemic.

► **COABE Virtual Conference** – IAACE partnered with COABE to offer members the opportunity to participate in the COABE Virtual Conference. The virtual conference was held in October; however, IAACE members had access to the recorded sessions for six months.

IAACE also partnered with IDWD to offer professional development credit for those who participated.

* *Provision of technical assistance to funded eligible providers as described in section 223(1)(c).*

Indiana continued to utilize five regional AECs to provide technical assistance and professional development to local providers in the areas of program performance, reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, ELL, and distance education. AECs assisted with the development of local program professional development plans and were a liaison between eligible providers and WIOA partners. AECs interpreted performance data for local programs and determined areas for improvement with significant input from the professional development team. Two of the AECs shared professional development duties for the state. One AEC served as workforce education coordinator to further develop partnerships with adult education and employers. Another AEC served as the academic and career coach liaison with local programs to build a student support system. The InTERS data team provided technical assistance and training individually to local program personnel, especially in the areas of data collection and reporting.

* *Monitoring and evaluation of the quality and improvement of adult education activities as described in section 223(1)(d).*

To monitor and evaluate the quality of adult education activities, program management, fiscal management, data management, and performance measures are continuously assessed. Three AECs serve as part of the formal monitoring team. Informal monitoring, desk audits, data checks, and program visits were conducted by state central office staff, AECs, and the InTERS data team. Low performing programs were identified, in part, based on NRS table 4 results. Visits (both in-person and virtually) were made to struggling programs.

Likewise, a comprehensive risk assessment was performed on specific programs, and based on these results, several adult education programs were selected for formal monitoring by the state team. Prior to the pandemic, on-site visits were made to view records and classes, and to interview personnel. Formal reports were sent to local providers after site visits.

Local programs developed professional development plans, targeted measurable skill gains to increase academic gains, and developed strategies to reduce student separations. Electronic report cards were provided monthly to local programs outlining key metrics. Report cards presented comparisons to state and local data based on points in time. Quarterly reports submitted by PDFs were utilized to identify promising practices, technical assistance, and gaps in service. Promising practices were highlighted monthly during statewide webinars. Local program personnel were placed on the agenda to share innovations on the call.

Until the pandemic, the state continued to significantly improve measurable skill gains and reduce the percentage of students who exited the program without gains. A strong three quarters prior to the pandemic helped the state finish in a good position but slightly below 2018-2019 results. Technical assistance and professional development were provided by AECs and the state team to further increase student success.

**Performance Data Analyses**

*Describe any significant findings from the evaluation of your performance data for the reporting period and efforts to improve outcomes for the core indicators of performance.*

PY 2019 Performance Outcomes

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 21,468 | * Student Enrollments
* Decrease from PY 18
 |
| 27,625 | * Level Gains (student may have achieved more than one gain)
* Decrease from PY 18
 |
| 4,134 | * HSEs and HS Diplomas Awarded
* Decrease from PY 18
 |
| 1,497 | * WEI (Workforce Education Initiative) Enrollments
* 89.41% completion rate
 |
| 2,853 | * IET Participants
* 1,434 earned certifications
* Level Gains
 |

IDWD has a system of state performance metrics in addition to the federal measures required under the National Reporting System. Above is a summary of outcomes that state staff shared broadly with practitioners in the field.

Because of COVID, this year saw a significant decrease in enrollments in several years. Despite the decrease in students, the state showed strong numbers in several areas until the pandemic hit. The number of students obtaining their HSED decreased by less than 800, but Indiana continued to be a leader in the number of high school equivalencies nationwide behind California and Florida.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Program Year | # of HSEs awarded |
| 2010 | 4,848 |
| 2011 | 5,683 |
| 2012 | 7,349 |
| 2013 | 6,759 |
| 2014 | 5,405 |
| 2015 | 5,132 |
| 2016 | 4,870 |
| 2017 | 4,989 |
| 2018 | 4,932 |
| 2019 | 4,146 |

Of the 21,468 students enrolled, 25% were English Language Learners (ELL), up from 22% in PY 18. Of the ELLs 56% entered instruction at the bottom two educational functioning levels (EFL). ELLs attended an average of 77 hours of instruction. Of the ELLs served 50% made a level gain down from 61% last year.

As mentioned earlier, Indiana saw a 17% decrease in the number of ABE/ASE students. Of the ABE/ASE student enrollments 97% entered instruction at an EFL of Level 4 or below up slightly from PY 18. The largest group, 38%, entered at EFL Level 3. (Indiana fully implemented TABE 11/12 on July 1, 2018.) The overall ABE/ASE student group attended an average of 77 hours of instruction. Overall, 72% of students received a post test, down from 77% in PY 18.

At 50%, students between the age of 25-44 are the largest demographic. Particularly interesting to Indiana is the percentage of students who fell within the WIOA Youth age range. Thirty-three percent of Indiana enrollments were between the ages of 16-24. This continued a multi-year trend of decreases in 16-17-year-old enrollments. IDWD shared this information at a local level to providers and Regional Workforce Development Boards as they looked to develop out of school youth programming.

**NRS Table Highlights**

***Table 4***

Indiana finished PY 2019 with an overall Table 4 MSG of 63 percent. While the previous program year’s average was four percentage points higher, Indiana exceeded the national average of 45 percent. Given that programs closed physical doors and were not initially able to proctor post-tests remotely, Indiana’s decrease was small in comparison. There was virtually no change though in the percentage of ABE completions. MSGs were at 68 percent for ABE in both PY 2018 and PY 2019. On the other hand, the state’s overall decrease in MSGs came from ELL. The percentage in PY 2019 was 49 percent compared to 60 percent in PY 2018.

As noted, total enrollment in ABE programs saw a significant decrease (17 percent) this year. We believe this is due largely due to the pandemic. The Workforce Education Initiative continued to grow statewide until the pandemic hit. In the WEI model, programs were funded to work with employers to establish work-based classes.

Total ELL enrollments remained stable given the challenges of a pandemic. Enrollment was down by only 27 students from the previous program year. However, the inability to complete post-tests in the last quarter hindered performance on Table 4 (49 percent) for this population. Still, ELL performance outpaced the national average of 45 percent. While enrollment, MSGs, and high school credential attainment were generally lower in PY 2019 because of the pandemic, Indiana was fortunate not to have experienced greater drops in performance. In summary, the strong showing during the first half of the program year, along with an incentive grant to local programs for meeting performance targets, carried the state through the end of PY 2019.

(As a preview to PY 2020, enrollment was down by approximately 35 percent. The number of high school credentials was down as well but the percentage of students receiving a diploma was up. While the MSG percentage was currently lower than the same time a year ago, the state was ahead of national averages. To boost performance, a mid-year incentive was in place for local programs meeting specific targets for PY 2020.)

**Integration with One-stop Partners**

*Describe how the State eligible agency, as the entity responsible for meeting one-stop requirements under 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 one-stop system. Describe how infrastructure costs are supported through State and local options.*

IDWD implemented a consortium model for adult education services in 2011. Eleven adult education consortia were created (the Indianapolis metropolitan area two boards were combined for adult education services) that aligned with the state’s one-stop economic growth regions. Consortia included local adult education providers, as well as other entities with interest in adult education service provision. Local board staff or representatives have served on and partnered with adult education ever since. As a result of this structure, the required WIOA integration of adult education into the one-stops had already taken place.

Indiana has 12 Workforce Development Boards (WDB) that are responsible for procurement of the one-stop operators and career services providers. Each adult education consortia chose a local provider to represent adult education on the WDB. At the state level the commissioner of IDWD serves on the Governors Workforce Cabinet. The commissioner represents the interests of adult education.

The WDBs are responsible for overseeing and ensuring all applicable career services are provided within the one-stop system. Adult education students have access to these services through one-stop offices as well as through adult one-stop staff who work at adult education sites. Additionally, local adult education programs are required to provide transition coaches who provide career services.

AEFLA funded career services in Indiana included outreach, intake and orientation including initial assessment. These assessments included TABE, Clas-E as well as the KUDER Indiana Career Explorer (ICE). ICE includes three brief assessments on interests, aptitude and values and is required along with TABE for enrollment. In PY 19 the ICE contract was not funded by AEFLA, but the administration to eligible students was. Additional AEFLA funded career services included referrals and coordination of activities with other programs and services as well as the provision of information on the availability of supportive services with appropriate referrals. AEFLA does not fund the Eligible Training Provider List. However, staff funded by AEFLA use this list with program participants to provide performance information and program costs of eligible training and workforce providers.

Indiana developed and implemented an infrastructure cost policy; local providers completed these negotiations.

**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:*

* *Describe when your state held a competition for IELCE program funds and the number of grants awarded by your state to support IELCE programs.*

State town halls were held in December 2019 to announce the competition. IDWD released the multi-year grant competition for IELCE funds in February 2020. Eight grants were awarded with implementation beginning July 1, 2020. Local providers may utilize both Section 243 funds and other funding for the provision of service.

* *Describe your state’s efforts in meeting the requirement to provide IELCE services in combination with integrated education and training activities.*

Indiana Adult Education continued to provide technical assistance and professional development for the Integrated Education and Training program as well as IELCE. These topics were addressed with program directors during monthly statewide webinars. A professional development opportunity – Establishing Workforce Education Initiative | Integrating Education & Training – was offered earlier (previous program year) to local programs to provide further guidance. The webinar was recorded and is currently on the adult education website.

IDWD established a formal IET/IELCE approval process. Programs must submit curriculum showing the components of an IET/IELCE class. Applications are then reviewed by central office staff and technical assistance is provided on any areas not meeting program requirements.

Statewide webinars highlighted the approval process for IET/IELCE and outlined considerations for local providers to follow. This was reiterated in a June 2020 statewide webinar. Local programs may now utilize IELCE as a bridge program, especially for lower-level ELL students, if training is available. The application included questions –

– What is the name of industry recognized certification? Describe any entry level requirements.

– What curriculum will be utilized? Attach the curriculum which includes descriptions of literacy and adult education, employability skills training, and occupational skill training components.

– Is the program length 40 hours or more and 14 weeks or less? How many hours will be dedicated to occupational training, employability training, and adult education?

– Describe regional demand for this occupation (list potential job positions, hiring companies, and Indiana Career Ready flame status).

As a part of the 2020 RFP process, webinars were held for eligible applicants, in addition to in-person town halls in December 2019. Considerations included –

IET and IELCE

Whether the activities provide learning in context, including through integrated education and training, so that the individual acquires the skills needed to transition to and complete postsecondary education and training programs, obtain and advance in employment leading to self-sufficiency, and to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship –

► Explain how the applicant has provided, or plans to provide, IET instruction to eligible individuals. Describe how College and Career Readiness standards are used by the applicant to enhance instruction. Explain how career readiness and workforce skills are taught, and/or plan to be taught, to eligible individuals. Describe how the applicant provided, and/or plans to provide, career awareness curriculum.

► What specific occupation or occupational sector will the applicant’s proposed IET for PY 2020 cover? Describe the intensity and quality of the adult education and literacy component of current and proposed IET course(s). Describe how occupationally relevant activities and materials have been, and will be, used in proposed IET program(s) for PY 2020. Explain which workforce training activities will be used in any proposed IET program(s) for PY 2020.

► How will the applicant provide these activities? Describe how the three required components (basic skills remediation, workforce preparation, and workforce training) of IET programs will occur simultaneously. Describe how the applicant intends to fund the training portion of proposed IET program(s). Does the applicant plan to offer the proposed IET in partnership with other organizations? If yes, explain this partnership.

► Describe how the three required components (basic skills remediation, workforce preparation, and workforce training) of IET programs will occur simultaneously. Describe how the applicant intends to fund the training portion of proposed IET program(s). Does the applicant plan to offer the proposed IET in partnership with other organizations? If yes, explain this partnership.

*● 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©(1) and discuss any performance results, challenges, and lessons learned from implementing those program goals.*

Webinars provided updates to the field about IET/IELCE enrollments, including applications approved, completion rate, and certification rate. The top programs by enrollments were 180 Skills (several certification programs), CNA, Paraprofessional, MOS (Microsoft Office Specialist Certification), and MSSC-CPT (Manufacturing Skills Standards Council).

Indiana Career Ready (ICR) enabled students, employers, and educators to use employer job requirements and job demand in making training and education decisions. As a part of the IELCE application process, adult education programs must access ICR and submit the job demand for positions that will result from proposed training. This information ensured that training aligned with employer needs as well as job openings.

● *Describe how the applicant has aligned, and will align, its service with the workforce development regional plans (local plans). Include an explanation of how the applicant plans to ensure continuous alignment with the regional plan (local plan). Describe the applicant’s relationship with the one-stop partners in the communities it serves.*

In the request for proposals, the application addressed –

► The extent to which the eligible provider demonstrates alignment between proposed activities and services and the strategy and goals of the local plan, as well as the activities and services of the one-stop partners –

Has the organization or program worked with the one-stop partner to ensure the efficient delivery of adult education services to eligible individuals? Discuss plans for co-enrollment, referral services, and infrastructure costs Explain how the applicant will establish, or retain, a working relationship with the one-stop partners in the communities it intends to serve.

As mentioned, IDWD adult education programs are organized into regional consortia. These consortia align with the state’s local economic growth regions. WDB members have participated in these regional consortia for many years. As a result, local WDBs have been involved in the adult education WIOA implementation process including integrating IELCE with the local workforce development system. IDWD is using lessons learned from the WorkINdiana program to implement IET programming across the state, including IELCE programming.

**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.*

Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) adopted Indiana Academic Standards in April 2014 for K-12. With few variations these align with the Common Core. IDWD has adopted OCTAE’s College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards for Adult Education a subset of the Common Core.

**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.*

Indiana measures recidivism by criminal acts resulting in rearrests, reconviction, and/or return to prison with or without a new sentence during a three-year period following the offender’s date of release from an Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) facility.

In 2019, recidivism rates increased nine percent for the first time in four years. Of all offenders who recidivated, approximately 37.2% returned to IDOC for the commission of a new crime, compared to approximately 62.8% for a technical rule violation of post-release supervision. In comparison during the previous five years, only 48% of returning offenders were due to a technical rule or court supervision violation.

However, the impact of correctional education on recidivism rate revealed that the lower the level of formal education attained while incarcerated, the higher the likelihood of recidivism. The impact of HSE attainment while incarcerated has been well-documented not only in Indiana but across other jurisdictions.

The Indiana experience indicates that a returning citizen who has NOT completed the HSE is 2.8 times more likely to become a recidivist than one who has achieved the HSE. Interestingly, research specific to Indiana also revealed –

* Incarcerated adults who attended correctional, academic adult education programs and achieved at least one academic gain have a recidivism rate of 29.7%.
* Those individuals who did not enroll in academic adult education programs had a recidivism rate of 67.8%.
* Continuing research specific to Indiana identifies two of the most significant variables of decreasing recidivism are formal education attainment and post-release employment.



Indiana is not new to conversations about combining workforce and education, but Governor Holcomb and his administration have made them the state’s central focus as noted in his State of the State addresses in 2018, 2019, and 2020. Those remarks plus the increasing investments Indiana is making in adult education and training programs clearly demonstrates the state’s support of promising programs. The commitment was noted by Governor Holcomb during the American Workforce Policy Advisory meeting in December 2019. “We are aligning the potential that is inside the wire with the demand that is outside so that hope turns into a reality.”

**Impact of COVID 19 on IDOC’s Adult Schools:**

Correctional environments are conducive to the rapid spread of viral illnesses such as the flu.

In addition to the guidance from several agencies at the state level each facility was required to develop and implement a plan that provided operational, prevention, and disease management. The individual facility plans typically addressed –

* Isolating housing units when a substantial number of IDP were ill.
* Prohibiting inmates from multiple housing units to comingle.
* Implementing stringent social distancing requirements including programming activities.
* Restricting staff assignments to certain areas/dorms to reduce staff movement among various physical settings.

As a result, nine of the 15 adult education and training schools have been totally closed and the six schools in Phase 5 facilities are providing services to a greatly reduced enrollment as well as attendance hours weekly. Not only have attendance hours been significantly reduced, prohibitions on travel by staff among facilities has resulted in a precipitous drop in “high-stakes” assessment frequency such as TABE and TASC including a cap of 10 students per assessment session which includes Phase 5 schools.

The closing of schools and/or the restrictions placed on movement and sizes of classes have reduced outcomes. For example, see literacy and HSE completers for current calendar year vs. last calendar year.