

Iowa Narrative Report 2013-2014

I. STATE LEADERSHIP FUNDS

Section 223(a) of the Act references the mandate that the eligible agency shall not use more than 12.5 percent of the grant funds for one or more of the eleven (11) State leadership activities. The activities, programs, and projects supported with State Leadership funds described below have been aligned with those eleven criteria as indicated.

STATEWIDE STAFF DEVELOPMENT LEADERSHIP PROJECTS

The State Staff Development Leadership Project is designed to fund and coordinate state level staff development activities within Section 223(a) of the Act based on one or more of the State Leadership activities focusing on the following areas: (1) Core measure attainment, (2) Quality program instruction, (3) Data accountability and integrity, and (4) Strengthening program delivery methods.

The impact of professional development on instruction and adult learner outcomes is evaluated against the following criteria:

- Statewide implementation, adoption, and diffusion into adult education and literacy instructional strategies, methodologies, and curriculum infusion.
- Long-term improvement in program outcomes measured by the state and local program's ability to continually meet negotiated benchmark levels.
- Adult learner assistance to effectively meet personal and program literacy goals.

There were two main areas that were funded from state leadership funds in PY 2014. The first area focused on the adoption of the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS), released in April of 2013. Aligning CASAS standards to College and Career Readiness standards has been a priority in professional development for Iowa. With changes to the high school equivalency assessment and its relation to the Common Core Standards, programs and instructors need to be prepared in helping students be successful with 21st century skills. Assisting in this alignment will be implementing Standards in Action in each provider's instruction. Iowa's strategic plan included focusing upon ELA standards in the first two years: Reading and Writing (2014), Listening and Speaking (2015), followed by the Math standards beginning in 2016. The Standards in Action structure was a natural fit to address unpacking the CCRS and begin addressing the implementation of the content. The initiative was a train-the-trainer model that allowed the local programs to continue the training and structure at their level. By partnering with LINCS, a trainer was provided and each of the 15 programs were able to send two instructors for the three of four two-day institutes that was held during PY 2014:

SIA I- 11/21-22/2013 for 28 participants in Des Moines, IA; rating: 76-95 percent;

SIA II- 3/12-13/2014 for 28 participants in Des Moines, IA; rating: 79-92 percent;

SIA III- 4/10-11/2014 for 28 participants in Des Moines, IA; rating: 78-95 percent.

*4th institute will be a pre-conference at the next AEL Institute in July 2014.

Additionally, webinars were offered to programs to supplement the standards in action training by providing an alternative delivery to target additional instructors. These included:

*Introduction to College and Career Readiness (3/10/2014);
College and Career Readiness Reading (3/25/2014); and
College and Career Readiness Writing (4/7/2014).*

State Leadership Activity(s): (1) the establishment or operation of professional development programs to improve the quality of instruction provided pursuant to local activities required under Section 231(b), including instruction incorporating phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, fluency, and reading comprehension

The second targeted area was the expansion of the **STudent Achievement in Reading (STAR)** program in Iowa. PY 2014 focused upon training the first state STAR trainer for certification, with three programs accepted to be the recipients of the training via trainer-in-training and a national mentor coach provided by KRATOS. Through this endeavor, our STAR sites are helping to promote not only additional assessment methods but managed enrollment class structure. This approach will aid other programs to successfully implement managed enrollment elements to their delivery structure, since ABE/ABE Intermediate in particular (target levels for STAR Reading strategies) represents the largest proportion of our adult learners in the state. The additional diagnostic assessment tools and reading strategies for this population will greatly aid the instruction in achieving educational functioning level gains. There were a total of nine participants from the three programs (SCC, KCC, and WITCC). The two institutes were hosted in Des Moines on 11/4-6/2013 with a rating of 99 percent and 4/2-4/2014 with a rating of 98 percent.

State Leadership Activity(s): (3) the provision of technology assistance, including staff training, to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities to enable the eligible providers to improve the quality of such activities;

Iowa's professional development system is coordinated by the state professional development specialist, who works with a team made up of administrators, instructors, and trainers from each funded program that establishes the **Adult Literacy Leadership Committee**. A data-driven planning process is used to identify professional development needs and to set priorities for each year. Emphasis is given in a number of key areas, including literacy, math, and English language instruction; assessment; educational technology; learning disabilities; and distance learning. Professional development is offered through an array of workshops and webinars, along with one-year academies for teachers, such as our Numeracy Academy. Teleconferences/Adobe Connect Pro/Zoom meetings are held on a bi-monthly basis. The Committee reviews the staff development efforts of the previous year and provides strategic leadership for upcoming professional development offerings. The Committee also helps in planning the annual Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) Summer Institute, which occurs each July. Committee work developed a state instructional handbook to provide guidance for programs in implementing quality instruction. This was implemented in 2014. Also, committee work began on developing instructor standards and were involved in the following professional development activities:

New Coordinator Workshop – 9/4/2013, for six coordinators, reviewed the updated Coordinator Handbook, policy and procedure changes. The workshop received a rating range between 88-100 percent. In addition, monthly coordinator meetings are held via Adobe Connect Pro/Zoom/teleconference. Agendas for these

meetings are set by the coordinators and often include technical assistance and training ranging from fiscal responsibility to assessment guidelines.

Iowa Adult Numeracy Academy - integrated face-to-face and online participation to use teacher inquiry and reflective learning to engage participants in learning mathematics and experiencing various instructional approaches to teaching mathematics. The Academy was organized around five central topics: number and operations, geometry, measurement, data analysis, and algebra. A cohort of seven participants completed the training from 9/19/2013 – 2/28/2014, with a rating range of 87-100 percent.

Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS)--CASAS certified state trainers include: one basic IT, one Providing Options for the Workplace, Education, and Rehabilitation (POWER),. These experts conduct training in their content areas as needed across the state and at conferences. All trainers participate in re-certification with CASAS. This was the final year for an IT trainer who is retiring and one who is transferring. The following occurred: *Enterprise and Year-End* at IVCD 7/9/2013 for 15 participants with a 85-100 percent rating; *Enterprise and Year-End* at Des Moines 7/11/2013 for 9 participants with a 78-94 percent rating; *CASAS Content Standards & Reports* at ICCC 8/8/2013 for 22 participants with a 52-98 percent rating; and *CASAS Implementation Training ICN regions* 10/8/2013 for 5 participants with a 90-100 percent rating.

Center for Adult English Language Acquisition (CAELA) Training – Iowa's ESL Regional Specialists provided technical assistance and three trainings on *Teaching English in an Adult Multi-Level Classroom Webinar* 3/4/2014 for 9 participants with a 97-100 percent rating; *ESL FAQs for Newer ESL Teachers* 3/31/2014 for 7 participants with a 90 percent rating; *Transitions for ESL Webinar* 4/28/2014 for 3 participants; and *Recruitment, Persistence, and Curriculum Training* at SWCC 5/3/2014 for 4 participants with an 81-100 percent rating.

State Leadership Activity(s): (1) the establishment or operation of professional development programs to improve the quality of instruction provided pursuant to local activities required under Section 231(b), including instruction incorporating phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, fluency, and reading comprehension, and instruction provided by volunteers or by personnel of a state or outlying area; (3) the provision of technology assistance, including staff training, to eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities to enable the eligible providers to improve the quality of such activities; and (8) other activities of statewide significance that promote the purpose of this title.

In addition, state leadership continues to fund the following activities:

Iowa Literacy Council- This advocacy group includes diverse business and education members from all over the state who support literacy. In PY 2014, the Iowa Literacy Council met twice in Des Moines, 10/11/2013 at Central Iowa Shelter and Services; and 5/16/2014 at the Department of Corrections.

State Leadership Activity(s): (10) integration of literacy instruction and occupational and skill training, and promoting linkages with employers;

Monitoring Visits to Colleges – The Adult Education and Literacy State Director and consultants monitored community college programs from September through May 2014. These included five on-site visits (EICC, 9/25/13; SWCC, 10/9/2013; IVCCD, 4/16/2014; IHCC, 4/23/2014; & DMACC, May 7, 2014.) and eleven desktop visits. The state leadership fund helps to support the inclusion of another program coordinator to attend a site visit. The purpose for site visits is to meet staff, learn about programs/facilities and procedures across the state, provide an opportunity for the staff at each center to ask questions to share ideas and concerns, and provide technical assistance to the program. In addition, site monitoring included observation of instructional practices and performing a document review. The monitoring tool used for both site and desktop addresses data collection, instructional practice, benchmark gains, curriculum and lesson plan development, assessment practices, and fiscal management.

State Leadership Activity(s): (5) the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of, and improvement in, adult education and literacy activities;

New in PY 2014 was an increase focus on **Career Awareness and ABE integration**. Work was done to establish stronger alignment with career pathway efforts through bridge curriculum that supports academic, training, and employment needs that have targeted adult education populations by addressing the following:

- The articulation of courses and modules, the mapping of programs within career pathways, and the establishment of bridges between credit and noncredit programs.
- The integration and contextualization of basic skills education and skills training. This process shall provide for seamless progressions between adult basic education and general education development programs and continuing education and credit certificate, diploma, and degree programs.
- The development of career pathways that support the attainment of industry-recognized credentials, diplomas, and degrees.

This initiative with the Division of Community Colleges is being driven by the recent funding and passage of the Pathways for Academic Career and Employment (PACE) law. In FY 2014, each of the fifteen community colleges received an appropriation and began administering a PACE program. These programs provide navigators to assist participants to gain skills needed. These skills are matched with to local demographics and employers, and can include basic education to specific occupational attainment. Along with skill attainment, the program assists with wraparound support for success and completion, such as transportation or child care needs. To aid in this effort, professional development was offered to Iowa's adult education and literacy instructors aimed at increasing ways to integrate career awareness.

Integrating Career Awareness – LINCS online training for Integrating Career Awareness into ABE and ESOL Classroom (LINCS Course) 1/16-2/28/2014 for 22 participants.

State Leadership Activity(s): (10) integration of literacy instruction and occupational and skill training, and promoting linkages with employers;

Additionally, at the end of PY14 the Division of Community Colleges applied for and was awarded a three-year intensive technical grant called *Moving Pathways Forward*. The intent of receiving the technical assistance would be to ensure that the goals related to Adult Basic Education and the PACE programs were aligned:

- Integrate adult education and literacy into the state's career pathways system;
- Strengthen the state's overall career pathways system; and
- Expand and enhance the implementation of local adult education career pathways activities according to local needs.

LOCAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

The Iowa statewide adult education and literacy program funded local staff development projects designed to serve the staff development needs of local providers. Of the 3.1 percent State Leadership funds that are passed through to local programs, in PY 2014, Iowa disseminated \$67,673 to serve the professional development needs of local adult education and literacy staff. Programs are held accountable for providing professional development and staffing programs with well-trained instructors, counselors, and administrators by tracking their training and providing an annual status update. Additionally, programs submit applications for professional development funds throughout the year for targeted events. These applications were to align with their local extension plan detailing professional development needs for the program. Each application included key elements:

- the category of professional development;
- a detailed activity plan;
- identifying what is driving the professional development – teacher, student, state;
- how the professional development offered will be evaluated;
- implementation strategy;
- professional development standard alignment;
- timeline for delivery; and
- estimated budget.

Documentation of implementation was submitted with claims requests. Sixty-two applications were funded in PY 2014. Each application was classified in five types of categories for funding – funds to present at a conference; funds to attend a conference; funds to receive educational assistance; funds for staff development; and funds to support a program project. Of the applications funded, 53 percent were for attending a conference and 30.6 percent were for staff development activities.

In PY 2013, eight professional development standards were adopted by Iowa's adult education and literacy program. All professional development offerings in PY 2014 needed to be aligned to at least one standard. Of the applications funded, twelve applications were aligned to only one standard, while the majority, 80.6 percent were aligned to two or more standards. The most commonly aligned standard, (74.2 percent) was Standard One: Strengthen practitioners' knowledge and application of content areas, instructional strategies, and assessment strategies based on research. Information on the standards is available at [Iowa AEL Professional Development Standards](#).

New in PY 2014 was state appropriated funds for Iowa's adult education and literacy programs. Of the \$5,140,000 allocated, 64 percent was expended during the fiscal year, and \$79,453, or 2.4 percent of those funds were spent on local professional development expenses.

State Leadership Activity(s): (1) the establishment or operation of professional development programs to improve the quality of instruction provided pursuant to local activities required under Section 231(b), including instruction incorporating phonemic awareness, systematic phonics, fluency, and reading comprehension, and instruction provided by volunteers or by personnel of a state or outlying area;

Future Direction in PY 2015

A focus on standards-based instruction will be continued and reinforced in PY 2015 with additional offerings of the Standards-in-Action (SIA) training provided by LINCS. The SIA training will align with the professional development efforts of implementing College and Career Readiness Standards targeted in 2015. In addition, instructor standards will continue to be refined and approved in PY 2015. This focus on standards supports explicit instruction and supports the continued expansion of STAR. Many Iowa adult education and literacy programs will continue to adopt managed enrollment delivery, in part or in full during PY 2015. Additionally, through the transition to Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act further training targeting career pathway implementation will be expanded.

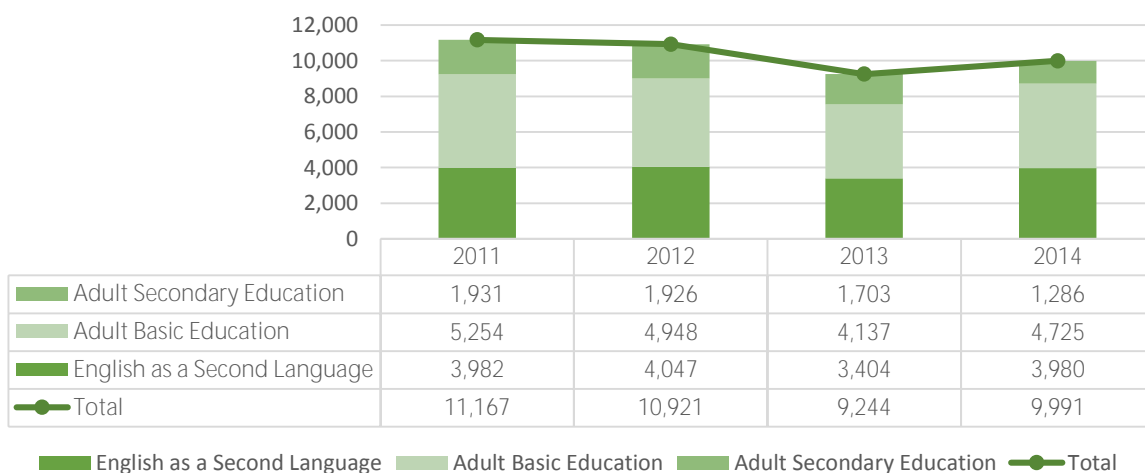
II. PERFORMANCE DATA ANALYSES

PY 2014 indicated that the typical adult education and literacy student served was a female, unemployed, white, averaging 18-44 years of age, with the highest year of school completed 9-12th grade without a high school diploma.

Iowa's Adult Education and Literacy Enrollment

An increase in the number of reportable adult learners (n=9,991) for PY14 as compared to PY 2013 (n=9,244). Of the total number of learners (9,991) that met the NRS guidelines, students in Adult Basic Education (ABE) comprised the single largest group by program type with 45 percent (n=4,725) of the total learners served. There was an increase from 37 percent to 40 percent (n=3,980) enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL) and a decrease in Adult Secondary Education (ASE) from 18 percent to 13 percent (n=1,286) enrolled.

Enrollment Comparison PY2011 to 2014

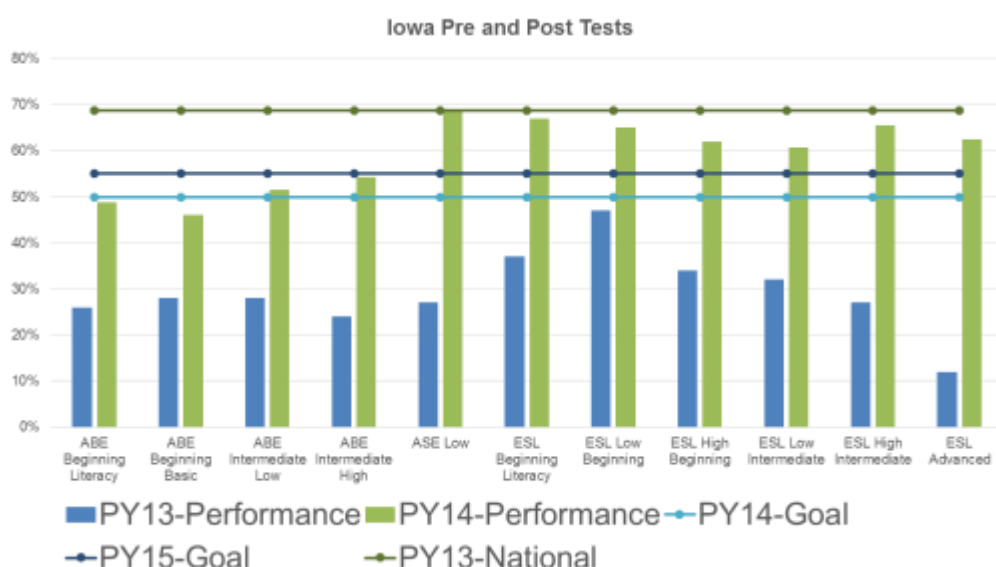


Student retention is critical to the process of accessing progress. Persistence and sufficient hours continues to be a challenge for programs but improved from PY 2013 45 percent. In PY 2014, 56 percent (9,991) of the 17,869 enrollees persisted for a minimum of 12 or more hours of instruction. Average hours of instruction for the 9,991 enrollees federally reported increased from 71.6 to 78.4 hours. ESL averaged the highest with 95 while ASE level enrollees only averaged 50 hours.

Iowa utilizes a data match process to determine if performance targets have been met for the follow-up core measures. Achieving educational functioning level (EFL) gains has been an area of increased focus in PY 2014.

Performance Measure I – Demonstrated Improvements in EFL

Iowa's aggregate pre/post test match increased from 46.5 to 59 percent in PY 2014. Of the 9,991 eligible participants 5,865 were pre and post tested. Of those pre and post tested, 72 percent (4,259) made an educational functioning level gain. Iowa made a significant benchmark improvement from PY 2013 where no benchmarks were met. Iowa's adult education and literacy programs met ten of the eleven federal negotiated benchmarks.



Performance Measure II – High School Completion

Iowa issued 3,408 high school equivalence diplomas between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2014. During this period of time there was high test volume as a test series ended in December 2013 causing all incomplete test scores to become invalid. Additionally, testing beginning in PY 2014 was with a new assessment product using primarily computer based delivery methods. The eligible cohort consisted of 1,759 participants of which 369 were not valid for matching. Based on the remaining cohort participants (1,390), 99 percent were matched as having achieved their high school equivalence diploma.

Performance Measure III – Entered Postsecondary Education or Training

In this measure the participant must have achieved their High School Equivalency Diploma while enrolled in adult education and literacy programs or have a secondary credential at entry

and exit the program. The participant must then enroll in a transition or postsecondary course or a training program within the program year. In PY 2014, there were 2,023 participants eligible for this cohort. Participants were matched against MIS data only. The report from the National Student Clearinghouse did not arrive in time of publication. With a 79.2 percent match rate, 866 (54 percent) entered postsecondary education or training.

Performance Measure IV – Entered Employment

Upon enrollment in adult education and literacy programs, participants are required to indicate employment status. Of the 9,991 participants reported in the NRS, 711 were not seeking employment and 14 did not report employment information (Figure 9-9). Fifty-one percent of the remaining enrollees self-reported as unemployed. To qualify for follow-up within this cohort to NRS, a participant must also exit the program, either by completing instruction or no longer participating. There were 2,181 participants that qualified for consideration in this cohort. Iowa participates as a data match state by partnering with Iowa Workforce Development for employment wage information. Nineteen percent of the cohort was not able to be matched due to missing data. However, of the 81 percent that was matched, 712 participants were identified as achieving employment within one quarter of exiting the adult education and literacy program.

Performance Measure V – Retained Employment

In PY 2014, 2,382 of the 9,991 participants in the adult education and literacy program, as reported to NRS, self-identified as employed. To qualify for follow-up within this cohort to NRS, a participant must also exit the program, either by completing instruction or no longer participating. In addition, all successfully employed participants from the entered employment cohort (712) are added. Therefore, 3,094 participants qualified for consideration in this cohort. With a 77.8 percent match rate, 1,071 (42 percent) participants retained their employment three quarters later after their exit from the adult education and literacy program.

Future Directions in PY 2015

Iowa will continue to address the need to gain higher EFL benchmark gains with standards-based instruction as well as implementing higher post testing rates. Collaboration through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act will support referrals and alignment of activities to support the core measures. A pilot project will be funded from state leadership funds to begin alignment studies for PY 2015.

III. INTEGRATION WITH OTHER PROGRAMS

The Iowa community college consortium based adult education and literacy delivery system has successfully integrated the activities sponsored under Title II with other relevant adult education, career development and employment, and training activities. The integration has been achieved through the cooperation, collaboration, and coordination efforts of the Iowa Department of Education, Iowa Workforce Development, and Iowa Department of Corrections to establish common goals and objectives.

In addition, the Division Administrator of Community Colleges provides input into the State Workforce Investment Board. The provision of core and other services is delineated in the state level MOU. The State Director for Adult Education participates and encourages involvement with local workforce investment boards. Each program is monitored as to their involvement with a

participatory planning committee. These committees are opportunities to work with one stop groups, community and faith based organizations.

An estimate would indicate that five percent of Title II funds are used to support activities through the One-Stop delivery system. These funds are used to support the participatory planning committees, workplace learning sites, and the National Career Readiness Certificates by the American College Testing (ACT) in the Iowa Workforce Development sites.

Future Direction in PY 2015

With the implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), greater alignment and engagement of key stakeholders and core partners will occur in PY 2015. Integrated educational training activities, career pathways and a unified state plan will all assist in collaboration and integration.

IV. ENGLISH LITERACY/CIVICS (EL/C) PROGRAM

The EL Civics grants are used to support the English as a Second Language (ESL) population enrolled in integrating civics and citizenship classes. The EL Civics classes are held in all fifteen (15) community college consortium sites throughout the state. The addition of the EL Civics funds has enabled the local programs to increase the number of classes to meet the educational needs of the immigrant population. As a result, the ESL enrollment constitutes 3,980 of Iowa's total adult literacy enrollment. Iowa's ESL Regional Specialists, who support the required integration of civics and ESL instruction in programs, have provided statewide support. These specialists conducted webinars and presentations at the Iowa Culture and Language Conference (ICLC) and AEL Institute.

Future Direction in PY 2015

With the implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), greater alignment and engagement of key stakeholders with English language needs will occur in PY 2015. Iowa has included English literacy activities with professional development initiatives such as STAR and Standards in Action and the new career pathway efforts. These initiatives will continue in PY 2015.

V. SECONDARY SCHOOL CREDENTIALS AND EQUIVALENCIES

In PY 2013, Iowa amended the state law, Chapter 32, in regards to the issuance of a state high school equivalency diploma (HSED). These changes in law allowed the state to conduct a competitive bid to select a test or tests to use in the awarding of an HSED. In December 2013, Iowa ended the use of one test series and began using the HiSET™ exclusively, effective January 2014. The HiSET™ test meets the requirement set by Iowa Code 259A.1 that the diploma shall be issued on the basis of satisfactory competence as shown by tests covering all of the following: Language Arts-Reading, Language Arts-Writing, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. In PY 2014, 3,408 HSED awards were issued by the state.

Future Direction in PY 2015

Iowa will continue to look at viable, statewide methods of awarding a high school equivalency diploma. If necessary, additional adjustments to legislation will be made to allow credit or portfolio based methods approved for awarding a HSED.

VI. Adult Education Standards

In 2010, Iowa adopted the Common Core State Standards (Iowa Core Standards) for K-12, which were to be articulated vertically through all grade levels by the end of PY 2015. While Iowa Adult Education and Literacy programs had been relying upon the CASAS content standards and competencies previously, some efforts in providing a crosswalk was done and professional development efforts focused on Math for adult learners from PY 2012-2014 through the Iowa Adult Education Numeracy Academy.

In program years 2013 and 2014, professional development for the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) began focusing upon the CCRS Reading and Writing standards with webinars including overview of the initiative and the standards themselves. These were supplemental to the four institutes for Standards-in-Action (SIA) that used the CCRS Reading and Writing standards. These opportunities followed OCTAE's roll out of the CCR standards in April 2013, which Iowa participated in the Kentucky training. The state strategic plan from that training was to focus upon the Reading and Writing standards in PY 2014, ELA/Listening and Speaking standards in PY 2015, and begin focusing upon the Math standards in PY 2016.

The July 2013 AEL Institute included a pre-conference on College and Career Readiness Reading Strategies and breakout sessions as an overview of the CCR. Professional development supporting the CCRS has been in done in PY 2014 and is highlighted in Section I.

In April 2014, Iowa sent a team to the CCR Implementation training sponsored by the Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education in Phoenix, AZ. This training was disseminated to local programs during the annual July AEL Institute and have been scheduled for PY 2015 in subsequent trainings.

Future Direction in PY 2015

While Iowa Adult Education and Literacy programs had been relying upon the CASAS content standards and competencies previously, proposed adoption of the CCRS for adult education and literacy programs was submitted to the legislature in PY 2014 and is in the process of final approval. It is expected that the state will adopt the CCRS during PY 2015. Programs will receive Leadership funding for only Standards-in-Action projects during PY2015. Targeted regional SIA institutes will be offered in PY 2015.