

South Dakota Narrative Report 2015-2016

➤ State Leadership Funds

- ❖ Describe how the State used funds [made available under Section 223] for each required *Leadership* activity.

With a total State Leadership budget of approximately \$140,000.00, South Dakota worked steadfastly throughout Program Year 2015 to provide appropriate guidance and quality professional development opportunities. In accordance with Section 223 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, South Dakota expended Leadership monies for the following activities, programs, initiatives, and projects:

- *Alignment of adult education and literacy activities with other core programs and One-Stop partners to implement the strategy identified in the Unified State Plan, including the development of Career Pathways to provide access to employment and training services for individuals in adult education and literacy activities.*

The South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation, along with its Title II Program Staff (and occasionally the other core programs and local AEFLA providers), made the following efforts during PY2015-16 toward general and specific WIOA awareness, access, and alignment—including Career Pathways.

- Unified State Plan Meetings
 - Unified State Plan Revisions Meetings
 - WIOA Common Intake Workgroup
 - One-Stop Managers' Meetings
 - Title I's Workforce Training—both New Staff Training and Statewide [Plenary] Training
 - WIOA Partnership Meetings
 - Career Pathways Training at Summer Summit (and Career Pathways Study Circles)
 - Core Partner Alignment Consortium Meetings
 - Assessment Accommodations [seminar] with Title I Program Specialists
 - Workforce Development Council Meetings
 - Title II's hour-long presentation at September 2015 meeting
 - WIOA Services Meeting for Minor-Aged Youth with SD's Unified Judicial System
 - One-Stop Quarterly Calls with Staff from Titles I and III
 - WIOA Unified State Plan Public Hearings
 - WIOA Implementation Meetings with Titles I, III, and IV
- *Establishment or operation of high quality Professional Development programs to improve instruction.*

Summer Summit 2015

This 2015 conference delivered focused half-day strands on College and Career Readiness Standards, Career Pathways, High School Equivalency, and Vocabulary Instruction. Through the generous, professional support from LINCS, South Dakota hosted nationally renowned presenters for this annual summit.

The plenary sessions featured a panel discussion entitled "Teacher Perspectives on Working with Diverse Populations," as well as a WIOA Panel Discussion representing administrators from Titles I, II, III, and IV. The breakout-session topics included our promising English Language Action Research Forum, as well as the

AEFLA-supported teachers' COABE Sharing Sessions from their attendance at the 2015 COABE National Conference in Denver.

These COABE National Conference 2015 attendees were required to submit a hardcopy report to the State and to briefly present upon the most significant session or topic from the COABE Conference during Title II's 2015 Summer Summit. The Reflection guides, supplementary resources (web links, handouts, PowerPoints, etc.), and presentation materials were collated and made available to all of the sub-grantee providers and affiliated partners after Summer Summit 2015.

This 2 ½-day conference was attended by approximately 70 agency directors, coordinators, instructors, and support staff from 9 sub-grantee providers and 4 American Indian Tribal Colleges.

College and Career Readiness Standards

In conjunction with LINCS and the South Dakota Professional Development Team, South Dakota delivered [face-to-face] Unit 1 of the College and Career Readiness Standards Training for both Mathematics and English Language Arts/Literacy at Summer Summit 2015 in July. The subsequent three (3) units in Mathematics and ELA/Literacy were delivered by the Professional Development Team via webinar throughout Quarter II of PY2015.

Student Achievement in Reading (STAR)

Students at Adult Basic Education Intermediate Low and High [Educational Functioning Levels] comprised 42% of all reportable learners for PY2015. Given the importance of evidence-based reading instruction and its potential impact on statewide programming, South Dakota expressed interest in participating in the planned STAR Hybrid Training Pilot for PY2015; however, with the postponement of STAR Pilot II, the State now plans to deliver the new iteration beginning PY2017.

COABE National Conference 2016

State ABE Leadership grant monies supported an AEFLA teacher's attendance at the COABE National Conference 2016 in Dallas, Texas. This teacher was selected to deliver a half-day preconference session for the Correctional Education strand.

Moreover, a number of DLR's sub-grantee partners have both the opportunity and the professional capacity to pursue classroom-based research; as its prerogative, the agency continues to support these endeavors as part of the Title II Program's overarching Teacher Quality and Effectiveness initiative.

Adult Education Instructor Development Program (AE IDP)

State Leadership funds supported a cohort of the AE IDP. This teacher training serves as an induction for new instructors, as well as a refresher for senior staff. (The structure of this IDP incorporated successful elements of the English Language Instructor Development Program [EL IDP] to include both mentorship and reflection components.) During the 2015-16 AE IDP, staff from three of Department of Labor and Regulation's sub-grantee providers reviewed assessment protocol (TABE 9&10), ABE/ASE instructional methodologies, program structures, NRS, CCRSAE, lesson planning, LD issues, and persistence-related topics.

English Language Instructor Development Program (EL IDP)

The EL IDP was in its fifth year during PY2015. The state agency, along with Lutheran Social Services' Center for New Americans, delivered another two cohorts of training which included a two-day, face-to-face training of mentorship, collaboration, classroom practice, observation, and evaluation. Additionally, multiple BEST Plus Administrator Trainings were delivered throughout the year for both new and senior ESL staff.

- *Provision of Technical Assistance on topics including instructional and programmatic practices, staff training, One-Stop roles, and technology integration.*

During Quarter IV of Program Year 2015-16, the DLR Local Offices and the Adult Education Providers convened Agency-facilitated WIOA Partnership Meetings. During these regional meetings, the U.S. Department of Labor's Career Pathways Toolkit: A Guide for System Development served as both a reference and a framework for future communication, coordination, and collaboration amongst core programs.

In addition to the Career Pathways and College and Career Readiness Standards Training already noted, the Agency made available Technical Assistance related to the KeyTrain, GED Academy, and Teknimedia curricula; these curricula address work-readiness, HSE test-preparation, and computer literacy (respectively).

Besides funding Distance Learning curricula and computer-based study supplements, the Title II Program continued to work closely with the South Dakota State Library's Electronic Resource Coordinators. The two coordinators provided the agency, local programs, and residents of South Dakota with assistance in accessing the State Library's vast electronic resources including World Book Discover, LearningExpress Library, SIRS Suite, ProQuest, Mango Languages, and Gale Virtual Reference Library. (LearningExpress Library has an online HSE Preparatory Program at no cost to library-card holders which is a welcome resource for individuals who cannot [or prefer not to] attend Adult Education.)

- *Monitoring and evaluation of the quality of, and the improvement in, adult education and literacy activities.*

State staff provided continuous technical assistance through telephonic and electronic correspondence, desk monitors, conference calls, webinars, video teleconferencing, and site visits. Furthermore, local administrators, instructors, and data specialists took advantage of the fact they could contact state staff with any questions regarding programmatic policies and data-quality issues with the assurance they would receive timely responses.

State staff evaluated local programs through desk monitors and annual site visits. Directors' meetings (both face-to-face and web-based) also provided opportunities to review participation rates, performance, data quality, policy changes, and program-goal updates. The Quarterly Reports assisted state staff with monitoring new or ongoing issues while concurrently providing agencies with more meaningful documentation and evaluative processes; the ongoing submission of quarterly data sets affords the local sub-grantee providers and the agency easy access to longitudinal comparisons across different points of the program year.

- ❖ Describe how the State used *Leadership* funds for permissible activities.

National Adult Education Professional Development Consortium (NAEPDC)

State Leadership grant monies paid South Dakota's 2015-16 membership dues to the NAEPDC.

Management Information System

The Leadership funds supported the State's Management Information System for WIOA Title II under the National Reporting System. The monies covered the Hosting Fees, the Annual Maintenance Agreements for Local Providers, and the State's Annual Maintenance Agreement. The Leadership dollars also supported vendor-hosted webinar trainings.

Four plenary webinars were held during the program year. These trainings addressed both general and specific aspects of data collection, entry, follow-up, reporting, analysis, and security. In addition to the regular plenary webinars, a New Users Training was offered. Each sub-grantee provider and its satellites also had the opportunity to avail themselves of an agency-specific [45-minute] sessions with the State and the vendor to ask local questions (without their colleagues in attendance). This approach has afforded the state, the MIS trainer, and the respective agencies more context, specificity, trust, rapport, comfort, and candor—all without embarrassing or compromising any one particular provider or data specialist.

Data Matching | Statewide Longitudinal Data System

South Dakota data matched all four of the NRS follow-up outcome measures this program year; DLR used South Dakota Unemployment Insurance records and the Wage Record Interchange System (via the State's Bureau of Information & Telecommunications), GED® Testing Service/Pearson VUE, and the National Student Clearinghouse to collect these data and ultimately report a valid, robust set of NRS Table 5 outcomes. Furthermore, the Adult Education program specialist attended quarterly meetings of South Dakota's Statewide Longitudinal Data System [workgroup].

TANF Managed Worksite

In addition to bolstering the State's support of Distance Learning options for students needing flexible alternatives, the AEL program expended some nominal Leadership funds in its work with the TANF program, the DLR Local Office in Sioux Falls, Southeast Technical Institute, and the Multi-Cultural Center of Sioux Falls to deliver ESL instruction, case management, and work-related activities in a Managed Worksite model.

National Career Readiness Certificate

All local programs and their students had access to ACT's KeyTrain curricula. Providers encouraged any learner who might benefit from the certificate, especially those students in the labor force, to earn the National Career Readiness Certificate. Furthermore, as an example of employer linkages, one of the sub-grantee providers delivered weekend ESL instruction on behalf of a processing plant for its existing non-English speaking [incumbent] workforce. The state agency hopes to highlight such promising practices during the coming program year at the Workforce Development Council meetings and at other stakeholder assemblies.

➤ **Performance Data Analysis**

- ❖ Describe how the adult education program performed in the overall assessment of core programs based upon 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.

For the first time since PY2008, South Dakota's Title II program exceeded a 40% aggregate percentage in terms of Educational Functioning Level Gain (i.e., Measureable Skills Gain) by achieving 43%. It should be noted too that South Dakota's PY2015 Post-Test Rate of 64% was also the highest since PY2008.

Given that South Dakota's Unemployment Rate was one of the lowest in the nation during PY2015, employers seemed anecdotally (and admittedly) desperate for skilled and unskilled workers alike—sometimes regardless of the labor force's educational attainment and work history. Subsequently, the individuals needing and seeking AEFLA services had more significant barriers to employment and self-sufficiency than some previous years [during the recession]. Additionally, 38% of the ESL Reportables at the time of entry this reporting-year were functioning at the Beginning Literacy level; many of these preliterate [former] refugees were relocated from war-torn regions of the world after sometimes living for years in camps.

A summative, annual evaluation of South Dakota's Adult Education and Literacy Program indicated both the agency and the sub-grantee providers are making quantifiable and qualifiable progress. More adoption of managed enrollment amongst local providers, data matching and improved reporting capabilities at the State level, a greater focus on English Language Acquisition's professional development, the Instructor Development Programs, and consistent MIS/NRS trainings contributed to much of the progress highlighted in the following graphics. (Future increases in Title II performance are primarily predicated upon [and subordinate to] high-quality instruction, activities, and services.)

Statewide AEFLA Participation and Performance

Measure	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Reportables	2,433 students	2,060 students	2,062 students	2,067 students
Completed Level Gain(s)	981 students	822 students	792 students	889 students
Completion Rate	40%	40%	38%	43%
Average Hours Per Student	71 hours	72 hours	74 hours	74 hours
Average Hours for Students with Post-Test	96 hours	100 hours	105 hours	98 hours
Total Hours of Classroom Instruction	173,760 hours	148,081 hours	152,594 hours	152,733 hours
Post-Testing Rate	61%	59%	57%	64%
Entered Employment	242 students	274 students	201 students	188 students
Retained Employment	416 students	582 students	596 students	404 students
Earned a GED® Test Credential	572 students	406 students	184 students	232 students
Entered Job Training or Postsecondary	94 students	94/147 students	33/125 students	20/51 students
Intermediate ABE Levels	1,248 = 51%	1,001 = 49%	897 = 44%	876 = 42%
ESL Learners	620 = 25%	576 = 28%	672 = 33%	716 = 35%

Figure 1. The table illustrates the State's participation levels and performance rates over the past four program years.

Statewide EFL Gains and Core Follow-Up Outcomes

Measure	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16 Target	2015-16 Actual
ABE Beginning Literacy	71%	60%	43%	60%	40%
ABE Beginning Basic Education	41%	43%	40%	44%	51%
ABE Intermediate Low	40%	37%	33%	40%	41%
ABE Intermediate High	33%	31%	31%	34%	31%
ASE Low	44%	47%	41%	48%	51%
ASE High	68%	69%	49%	N/A	65%
ESL Beginning Literacy	31%	34%	35%	37%	39%
ESL Low Beginning	52%	53%	53%	53%	49%
ESL High Beginning	53%	48%	51%	50%	53%
ESL Intermediate Low	51%	41%	46%	42%	45%
ESL Intermediate High	41%	41%	56%	42%	39%
ESL Advanced	31%	51%	41%	37%	47%
Total	40%	40%	38%	N/A	43%
Measure	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16 Target	2015-16 Actual
Earned a GED® Credential	96%	91%	90%	85%	95%
Entered Postsecondary or Training	13% --	17% 21%	8% 21%	19%	4% 13%
Entered Employment	57%	55%	53%	56%	54%
Retained Employment	71%	75%	74%	76%	73%

Figure 2. This table illustrates levels of performance across the core indicators of performance.

➤ Integration with One-Stop Partners

- ❖ Describe how the State eligible agency executes 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.

Integration of Activities

The Department of Labor and Regulation considers adult education a key component to workforce development and has increased its prominence by integrating adult education services/opportunities into all its recent workforce programs, including the Disability Employment Initiative (DEI), Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), and the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP); through this integration, partnerships were formed to best serve residents of South Dakota. Many of our clients have not been in school for years, and they often need brush-up or remediation in Reading and Mathematics to have success in job training or postsecondary education.

Local field offices and the adult education programs continue to work closely to meet the needs of our clients. The partnership between Labor and Adult Education is especially evident with the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) initiative. The WorkKeys and KeyTrain programs are available at the adult education centers; Title II's instructional staff members offer KeyTrain as a supplemental Workplace Literacy curriculum.

Workforce Investment Board

The Workforce Development Council serves as both the State and Local Workforce Investment Board. With the Council's support, adult education issues are addressed and program initiatives are integrated with other state efforts.

Labor and Regulation's workforce training director serves as the executive director for the Council, and the Cabinet Secretary sits on the Council as a voting member. Through the Council's efforts, local offices provide assistance with job searches, employment guidance and counseling, as well as referrals to appropriate services which benefit individuals under all WIOA Titles. The local offices support not only those seeking jobs and training, but also employers.

The One-Stop System of Delivery

The One-Stop system does not comprise a specific budget item; indirect costs from WIOA Titles I – III support the One-Stop system. Time is allocated according to function and an established percentage approved by DLR, as well as approved by the U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of Education.

The Adult Education and Literacy Program emphasizes that the responsibilities established by Title I of WIOA are not secondary or subsidiary to the responsibilities and requirements established by Title II of WIOA (i.e., AEFLA); the WIOA Title I and AEFLA requirements must both be satisfied. The Titles I – III program specialists work together to coordinate professional development and training activities, communicate performance expectations and procedural understandings, and collaborate to best assist the mutual program participants.

As a continued example of the aforementioned, during Quarter IV of Program Year 2015-16, the DLR Local Offices and the Adult Education Providers convened for an Agency-facilitated WIOA Partnership Meeting. During these regional meetings, the U.S. Department of Labor's Career Pathways Toolkit: A Guide for System Development served as both a reference and a framework for future communication, coordination, and collaboration amongst core programs.

Regarding the applicable career services provided at the One-Stop, South Dakota's core programs are currently compiling a master reference of all [locally] available services and supports (including required One-Stop partners) to eventually increase awareness, facilitate referrals, promote enrollments, reinforce shared case-management, identify training opportunities, and codify programmatic documentation. As to WIOA infrastructure costs, the Agency plans to proffer a fee schedule [for co-location] based upon square-footage and shared utility costs effective July 01, 2017. (The federal Joint One-Stop Infrastructure Funding Guidance will no doubt inform these infrastructure cost-plans.)

➤ Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) Program

- ❖ Describe how the State is using funds under Section 243 to support these activities.
 - *Describe when your State held a competition for IELCE program funds and the number of grants awarded by your State to support IELCE programs.*

South Dakota last held a Title II grant competition in the spring of 2012. At that time, three local providers were awarded EL/Civics funds. Since PY2012, the State has necessarily extended this grant cycle pending WIOA's Final Rules and the RFP Guidance from OCTAE. (A direct, equitable competition is planned for the spring of 2017 to determine the next slate of local Title II providers; this competition will utilize a same-process approach for Section 243 funds, in addition to the State grant funds.)

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

Beyond the local providers' existing IET-related projects and onsite contextualized education, the State made no significant efforts during PY2015-16 to meet the [draft] IELCE requirements in combination with IET activities. However, key staff will attend pertinent trainings and technical assistance throughout PY2016 to learn the new data-collection obligations, reporting requirements, and programmatic-determinations for IELCE programs and activities. The Agency too plans for the upcoming RFP to explicitly solicit IELCE services (as detailed in WIOA and its Final Rules) effective July 01, 2017.

- *Describe how the State is progressing towards program goals of preparing and placing IELCE program participants into unsubsidized employment within high-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency and discuss any performance results, challenges, and lessons learned from implementing those program goals.*

During the transitional year of PY2016, the Agency will fund a single provider (rather than the three providers under the EL/Civics allotment) with Section 243 funds based upon that provider's capacity to meet multiple [concurrent or sequential] programmatic requirements under IELCE. This particular provider has full-time instructional staff, business partnerships, an onsite Job Developer for non-native speakers, relationships with the One-Stop, and years of experience delivering Citizenship Test Preparation, Civics Education, Workplace Literacy, and English Language Acquisition classes.

- *Describe how the State is progressing towards program goals of ensuring that IELCE program activities are integrated with the local workforce development system and discuss any performance results, challenges, and lessons learned from implementing those program goals.*

While not germane to the PY2015-16 Reporting Year, the Agency should note a Special Project (with its sole [PY2016-17] IELCE provider) that supports alignment and integration of IELCE with Workforce Development. This project expands certain Integrated Education and Training opportunities, specifically Workforce Skills, to complement and supplement the existing English Language Acquisition courses and sector-specific STEP classes by providing the following.

- Computer Literacy (Integrated Digital Literacy classes and Basic Computer Skills)
- English for Driving Class
- Job Interview Classes
- Math and American Measurements Class

➤ **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, describe how your Adult Education content standards are aligned with those K-12 standards.

For context, the South Dakota Department of Education adopted in 2010 the Common Core State Standards for both English Language Arts and Mathematics. During the 2014 Legislative Session, Governor Dugaard penned an open letter in support of Common Core.

The South Dakota Department of Education also determines the State's recognized High School Equivalencies; these secondary credentials have too aligned to meet the expectations of the Common Core State Standards [as coordinated by the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers].

Over the past few years, the Title II program has worked dutifully to recalibrate its instruction and activities to align with the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education. Per the WIOA mandate in Section 102, the State's Title II Program formally adopted a validated set of standards for its delivery of AEFLA instruction, activities, and services. As noted within South Dakota's Unified State Plan, the implementation became effective July 01, 2016.

State Leadership funds were expended in PY2015-16 to deliver (in conjunction with LINCS) further College and Career Readiness Standards Training for both English Language Arts and Mathematics Standards. A hybrid model of face-to-face and web-based instruction/interaction was used to facilitate the understanding, adoption, application, and implementation of standards-based Adult Education in South Dakota.

The State's Title II Program implicitly trusts the methodology employed by MPR Associates, under contract with U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education, to identify [within the Common Core State Standards] a set of College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education. (Because these standards continue to be promulgated by the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education's Division of Adult Education and Literacy, the task of documenting how College and Career Readiness Standards align with Common Core State Standards certainly seems at least a shared responsibility.)

➤ **Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals**

- ❖ 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 South Dakota Department of Corrections currently tracks recidivism data by calendar year. For now, DOC is at best able to isolate its release-data by those inmates who completed their High School Equivalency at any point while incarcerated, and who then were released during a particular calendar year.

Therefore, the relative rate of recidivism for criminal offenders [assisted under AEFLA] who earned a GED® credential while incarcerated in South Dakota, and who then were released at some point in 2014, is 27.2%. This percentage includes HSE-completers who served an expired or suspended sentence, as well as those granted parole in 2014. The recidivism data for calendar year 2015 will not be available until September 2017.