

South Dakota Narrative Report 2016-2017

➤ 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 2016 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.*

As the eligible agency, the South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR), along with its Title II Program Staff [and occasionally the other core programs and local AEFLA providers], made the following efforts during PY2016-17 toward general and specific WIOA awareness, access, and alignment.

- Attended WIOA Budgetary, Risk Assessment, Fiscal-Audit, and Sub-Recipient Monitoring Meetings
- Provided One-Stop Local Offices with assessment-related and High School Equivalency [preparation and testing] resources, guidance, and technical assistance
- Represented WIOA Title II at DLR's Registered Apprenticeship Meetings
- Collaborated with state's largest One-Stop Local Office and the respective Title II providers on WIOA work group researching census, High School Equivalency, and Adult Education data for a local outreach initiative and community needs assessment
- Participated in onsite and virtual One-Stop Local Office Managers' Meetings
 - Participated in WIOA Conference Calls with Local One-Stop office staff
- Contributed to the Unified State Plan [Revisions] Meetings
- Toured Box Elder Job Corps site, met with Job Corps administrators, and conducted follow-up
- Convened Workforce Training's Data Team Meetings to review PIRL and Joint Reporting
- Met with South Dakota Technical Institutes' Vice Presidents to overview WIOA Title II instruction, activities, and services—as well as to discuss Career Pathways as defined in §3(7)
- Facilitated AEFLA's Alignment Activity for the State's [sole] Workforce Development Council

- Activity included reviewing the Request for Proposal's applications to determine their consistency with the Unified State Plan's vision, goals, and articulated strategies
 - Solicited recommendations from Council Members to better promote alignment with State Plan
 - Represented State Government on the State Library's Electronic Resources Task Force
 - Provided guidance and technical assistance [on High School Equivalency testing, test-preparation, and Adult Education methodology] to Yankton Sioux Tribe
 - Attended quarterly Workforce Development Council Meetings
- *Establishment or operation of high quality Professional Development programs to improve instruction.*

Summer Summit 2016

This 2016 conference delivered focused, day-long strands on Using Technology to Enhance Learning Across Content Areas and Developing Oral Proficiency in Adults Learning English. The summit also afforded attendees half-day sessions on Transition Skills for English Learners, as well as Best Practices in Basic Education and GED® Preparation Classrooms.

The concurrent-session topics included our promising English Language Action Research Forum, Google Apps for Education, TABE Assessments, Distance Education, GED Testing Service, Correctional Education, Chunk Reading, and Brain Research.

In addition to national, regional, and state experts, four AEFLA staff presented during the summit. This 2.5-day conference was attended by approximately 70 agency directors, coordinators, instructors, and support staff from 7 sub-grantee providers and 4 American Indian Tribal Colleges.

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 2016-17 AE IDP, staff from two of Department of Labor and Regulation's sub-grantee providers reviewed assessment protocol (Tests of Adult Basic Education's 9&10 Series), 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 sixth year during PY2016. 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 [and recalibration-trainings] were delivered throughout the year for both new and senior ESL staff.

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

National Reporting System

The agency used State Leadership grant funds to send two key [local] Education Coordinators to the Learn, Evaluate, Assess and Plan (LEAP) training workshops; these two iterations were developed by NRS and AIR to assist states in understanding, planning, and implementing accountability and related program design-changes.

Resultant of the NRS LEAP I and LEAP II trainings, the agency and the Professional Development team delivered a five-part webinar series [utilizing many of the NRS-derived materials] to delve the following topics.

- Program Entry, Exit, and POPs
- Participants, Reportables, Intake, and Barriers
- Measurable Skills Gains
- Credential Attainment Indicator
- Employment Performance Indicators

Mathematics Training for [Adult Secondary] Educators

Title II Leadership funds supported the coordination with State GED® Testing Administrator, GED Testing Service, Title II's Adult Education providers, GED® Testing Sites, and Tribal Colleges for regional trainings delivered by GED Testing Service. These trainings focused on higher level Mathematics (i.e., algebra, quadratic equations, statistics, probability, and geometry) and the use of manipulatives. These regional offerings were held in Sioux Falls, Pierre, and Rapid City—eastern, central, and western South Dakota respectively.

Integrated Education and Training/Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education

South Dakota's Title II Professional Development team collaborated on the delivery of a three-part webinar series to examine the purpose and components of Integrated Education and Training, with a secondary focus on Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education programming.

- Definition and Models of IET
- Workforce Preparation Activities
- Workforce Training Activities

As part of the training, sub-recipients identified instances of Integrated Education and Training (IET) and discussed examples from their own local programs. Participants also explored practical approaches to facilitate career-infused learning within the classroom; such approaches featured the development of IET-aligned thematic [curricular] units on employability skills and high-demand occupational clusters for learners at all levels of English proficiency. Moreover, participants engaged in structured activities to plan further enhancements for their own IET instruction, activities, services, and outreach.

Distance Education Special Project

DLR's Distance Education Special Project was designed to provide incumbent workers, geographically isolated adults, and individuals with various barriers to participating in traditional Adult Education

instruction (e.g., transportation, childcare, health issues, etc.) with some meaningful [synchronous and asynchronous] distance education opportunities.

This endeavor was not only meant to benefit the aforementioned participants and other Title II providers, but to also advantage DLR One Stop local offices in appropriate circumstances. While this pilot project served as an allowable Statewide Employment and Training Activity under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (§134), Title II Leadership funds were expended to provide coordination, technical assistance, and support.

Digital Skills and Computer Literacy

Title II Leadership funds supported a two-hour Computer Literacy training for Title II administrators and staff. This technical assistance reviewed the various components of the vendor-subscription including Basic Computer Skills courses (i.e., skills and concepts, Window 7, and Windows 10), internet and email courses, and Microsoft Office courses.

Teknimedia's Computer Skills for the GED® Test [module] was also reviewed. This offering helps instructors verify whether students have the computer skills necessary for computer-based testing, and provides courses for the students to improve these computer skills.

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

Desk Monitoring

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.

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.

Onsite Programmatic Monitors

During the final quarter of Program Year 2016-17, the South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation conducted an onsite programmatic monitor of each local sub-recipient under Title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act—the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act. This monitor largely consisted of interviews, observations, database demonstrations, student-file reviews, and examinations of pertinent documents including student intake forms, class schedules, participation/performance reports, and local program goals.

Sub-recipients scheduled the onsite monitor at their convenience; a local monitoring guide was provided prior to the visit. After the monitors were concluded, a formal [hardcopy] Monitor Letter was

sent to each provider with an enclosed Monitor Summary which outlined the context and goals of the Title II site visit. The Monitor Scope then briefly detailed the individuals involved and the topics addressed during the review. The Monitor Report subsequently identified multiple noteworthy practices, as well as areas of concerns and recommended actions.

- ❖ 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 2016-17 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 plenary trainings, PY2016 marked the fifth year the state has delivered agency-specific webinar reviews; each provider had the opportunity to participate in 45-minute sessions with the agency and the MIS vendor where questions were entertained and local data sets were examined (without their statewide colleagues in attendance). This approach has afforded the state, the MIS vendor-trainers, and the respective sub-grantee providers the means to scrutinize topics in highly specific context, while often building rapport and eliciting more effective communication.

Essential Education

AEFLA's Leadership funds supported a contract with Essential Education, the vendor for the GED Academy™. This stand-alone, self-paced preparation program for ABE instruction and GED-preparation was delivered both online and offline. The offline version was made available specifically for our Correctional Education sites within the South Dakota Department of Corrections. The Title II Program plans to increase the contract's scope [for both offline and online license] in PY2017-18 to meet the increased usage resultant of the Distance Education Special Project and DOC's intended expansion of the offline pilot.

COABE National Conference 2017

State ABE Leadership grant monies supported four AEFLA teachers' attendance at the 2017 COABE National Conference in Orlando, Florida. These teachers were selected to present on Correctional Education, English Language Acquisition, and Poverty/Access-related topics.

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's Civics Field Trips

During South Dakota's 2017 Legislative Session, three local sub-recipients brought more than 100 Title II participants to Pierre to tour the Cultural Heritage Center, meet with DLR representatives and state

lawmakers, tour the Capitol building, and observe the legislators in both chambers. These field trips help contextualize civics lessons, citizenship-test preparation, and social-studies coursework from the classroom.

This project continues to prove quite rewarding for both the agency and the Adult Education students (primarily English language learners, resettled refugees, and secondary migrants). For many of these learners, this excursion proves the first time they have directly accessed government at any level. Furthermore, like a number of local legislators, the governor often makes time to greet our students and to take pictures with the contingents in the Capitol's rotunda.

➤ 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 second time since PY2008, South Dakota's Title II program exceeded a 40% aggregate percentage in terms of Measureable Skill Gains (MSG) by achieving 42% statewide—even with the full implementation of the new Periods of Participation requirement.

South Dakota's low Unemployment Rate continued to impact Title II's participant-base; 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, 52% of PY2016's ESL participants at the time of entry were functioning at Level 1 and Level 2; many of these preliterate [former] refugees were relocated from war-torn regions of the world after sometimes living for years in camps.

As part of the required AEFLA grant competition under WIOA, a summative evaluation of South Dakota's Adult Education and Literacy Program indicated both the agency and the sub-grantee providers had made quantifiable and qualifiable improvement during this Title II grant cycle. While not without challenges, the Title II program staff feels content with the progress made regarding WIOA/NRS implementation related to access, participation, and performance.

Because of the MSG-implications for High School Equivalency across all Periods of Participation, the program is recalibrating its reliance upon post-testing rates as a prominent indicator of student progression, effective programming, and accountability. While somewhat yet marginal, the State perceives an upward trend in terms of the number of participants achieving a GED® test credential. This trajectory is welcome given the challenges with transitioning from paper/pencil to computer-based testing and from the 2002 series to the 2014 series—all whilst lacking alignment between the current TABE assessments and the Official GED® subtests.

Of course, future increases in Title II performance are primarily predicated upon [and subordinate to] high-quality instruction, activities, and services. Unfortunately, PY2016 did not witness any advances in terms of collecting, entering, or analyzing NRS Table 5 data. This dearth of outcome-measures still leaves the program uncertain of forthcoming targets and goals related to employment, credentials, earnings, and postsecondary/training matriculations. Nonetheless, the agency and the local provides anticipate the opportunity to eventually compare regional and national data sets [across more standardized metrics] with South Dakota's figures for norm-referenced analyses.

➤ **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; therefore, DLR has increased Title II's prominence by highlighting Adult Education services within its [recent] workforce programs and including the Disability Employment Initiative, National Career Readiness Certificate, Career Pathways, Registered Apprenticeships/Pre-Apprenticeships, Soft Skills Training, Job Search Assistance Program, Trade Adjustment Assistance, and the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program; through this integration, partnerships have been formed and nurtured to best serve residents of South Dakota. Many of DLR's 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 Integrated Resource Teams [concept] being promoted across WIOA Core Programs and required One-Stop partners. The IRT model functions at the administrative level whereby staff communicate, coordinate, and collaborate; this IRT model also operates at the participant-level whereby the client meets with staff from the pertinent, involved programs within the One-Stop system.

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 functioned as the executive director for the Council, and the Cabinet Secretary sat 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 businesses and 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.

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 conducted a direct, equitably accessed Title II grant competition in the spring of 2017; this RFP utilized a same-process approach for Section 243 funds. Resultant of the competition, one local provider was awarded the entirety of South Dakota's Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education pass-through funding. (While other providers deliver English Literacy and Civics Education, most of these services are considered "activities" rather than full-fledged IELCE "programs" due to the IET requirements.)

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

The local Education Coordinator for the sole IELCE funding-recipient serves on Title II's Professional Development team. This individual participated in PY2016's NRS LEAP I and LEAP II trainings; this coordinator was also supported in her attendance at the COABE National Conference, as well as Minnesota English Learner Education Conference, to receive relevant training and technical assistance

throughout PY2016 to learn the new data-collection obligations, reporting requirements, and programmatic-determinations for IELCE programs and activities.

- *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 funded a single provider (rather than the three providers under the previous 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 possesses highly qualified [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.*

The Department of Labor and Regulation funded a Special Project with its local IELCE sub-recipient to support alignment and integration of IELCE with Workforce Development. This project expanded certain Integrated Education and Training opportunities, specifically Workforce Skills, to complement and supplement the existing English Language Acquisition courses and sector-specific Skills That Employ People (STEP) classes by providing the following courses.

- Computer Literacy (Integrated Digital Literacy classes and Basic Computer Skills)
- English for Driving Class
- Job Interview Classes
- Math and American Measurements Class
- Commercial Housekeeping
- Retail Customer Service
- Food Service and Safety
- General Manufacturing Safety
- Introduction to Patient Care
- Landscaping and Gardening

➤ **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 Daugaard 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.

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 2015, is 23.2%. This percentage includes HSE-completers who served an expired or suspended sentence, as well as those granted parole in 2015. The recidivism data for calendar year 2016 will not be available until September 2018.