Tennessee Narrative Report 2016 – 2017

**December 28, 2017**

1. **State Leadership Funds – Describe how the State has used funds made available under section 223 (State Leadership activities) for each the following required activities: Alignment of adult education and literacy activities with other one-stop required partners to implement the strategies in the Unified or Combined State Plan as described in section 223(1)(a).**

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

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

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

During the 2016-2017 program year, Tennessee Adult Education worked to become a more involve partner within the American Job Center (AJC) structure. In Tennessee there are 27 comprehensive AJCs, and Adult Education has a presence in all of them. Services provided alongside the partners within the AJCs include orientation, assessments, and instruction. Efforts have been made by the partners to analyze the needs of participants as they enroll in programs in order to co-enroll and provide as many services as possible to an individual at one time.

We are in continuous communication with our Workforce Services partners to improve the interaction of participants and AJC staff. Trainings and documents have been exchanged between the partners to help educate staff on practices and questions, as they pertain to partner services, to help assist a participant instead of sending them on a journey to find the answer for which they are looking. There is work to be done with the partnerships to help with smooth transitional services or co-enrollment, but this should be reasonably achievable.

Tennessee Adult Ed. District Coordinators and teachers were provided with multiple training and development opportunities supported by State Leadership funds and leading toward implementation of goals of the State Plan. Training and meetings were specifically provided to educate and instruct our Coordinators on practices for incorporating with the fellow partners in the AJC. These meetings allowed for cooperation and negotiation to take place amongst partners with the help and direction of State Staff.

Training was also provided specifically for the improvement of Adult Ed. staff in many formats and venues, including the Academy for Instructional Excellence, a Fall Leadership Summit for program supervisors, and a Fall Regional Teacher Training. In addition to these broad-based trainings which touched nearly every adult education supervisor and teacher in the state, there were specialized series of trainings such as Fiscal/Budget trainings, Distance Education, ESOL and CASAS trainings, New Supervisor Training, College and Career Readiness Standards training for teachers, and special Career Pathways initiatives, as well as technical assistance offered onsite to struggling programs.

In addition to the various training opportunities that are provided, every quarter the State office holds a District Coordinators Conference. The gathering is an effort to bring the Coordinators together to learn best practices and analyze efforts that are taking place within their county service area. These are conducted in person, and will be conducted via webinar in the future as an effort to utilize technology for training opportunities.

Over the past two years Tennessee Adult Education has adapted and refined its monitoring process of sub-recipients. There are multiple ways that Tennessee monitors its programs, those being, desktop monitoring (whether it be for programmatic data or fiscal documents), consultants making periodic onsite visits, and formal monitoring visit conducted by the Division and the Program Accountability Review (PAR) team.

Throughout the year desktop monitoring (in some cases desktop monitoring turns into site visits as it pertains to fiscal documents) is conducted with all eight (8) programs. Desktop consist of monitoring reports to ensure that cohorts balance as needed and that there are no errors in the data. As errors are discovered within program data, data update/correction requests are then sent to the State office for correction. Reviewing the data allows for capturing errors and correcting them before a systemic issues arise.

In an effort to stymie programmatic issues before they become normal practice of a program and before the formal monitoring process takes place, technical assistance was provided by Consultants to our 8 Districts. Consultants provide instruction and assistance to programs when needed by the program, and conducted site reviews during routine visits. This practice is being refined to include help with fiscal practices, as well as programmatic. Site visits are conducted for the various sites throughout a given District to check for consistency of policy implementation, moving forward this will include review of Adult Ed. services being provided within AJCs. Review of the AJCs will be to ensure that services are being provided properly and that Adult Ed. has a sufficient presence within the site.

The final culmination of monitoring is illustrated by the formal monitoring process. The Adult Ed. Monitoring Guide is provided to and approved by the Central Procurement Office and sets out the monitoring process for Adult Ed. Four (4) programs (out of 8 programs) are monitored during the program year, and the monitoring consists of a programmatic monitoring conducted by the Division, while fiscal review is conducted by the PAR team.

Programmatic review consist of conducting a questionnaire of programmatic practices at which time State staff interview the local program staff to check for policy compliance. Questions focus on Assessment Policy requirements, Distance Education, data upkeep, and services being provided. After interviews, student files are reviewed and compared to what has been entered into the data management system. These practices are conducted for several counties within a District in order to check for consistency and accuracy. After conducting interviews and file review, we then inspect inventory that is listed for a location to ensure equipment is being properly tracked. While programmatic review is taking place, fiscal review is being conducted by the PAR team. Fiscal review consists of a fiscal questionnaire and review of fiscal documents and books.

While interviewing, file review, and inventory inspections are being conducted State staff sits in on classes. Class review allows for State staff to check for alignment with standards handed down by the State and check for needs of the instructor. Sitting in the class also allows for the opportunity to discuss issues that the instructor may face, and how the State can assist in improving operations. After the class concludes State staff takes the opportunity sit and speak with students about services. The goal is to take into account the perspective and experience of the student to improve instruction.

A typical monitoring visit to a program will take a week to complete. Once the monitoring concludes an exit interview is conducted with relevant programmatic and fiscal staff. Returning to the State office, staff that was involved with the visit draft a report. Adult Ed. staff drafts the programmatic portion, while the PAR team drafts the fiscal report. Programs are required to then provide a corrective action plan, which will act as the basis for the correction of the findings Three (3) months after the issuance of the reports, follow up visits will begin to be scheduled to evaluate how corrective endeavors are progressing. Findings will then be closed as the State determines that the policies and practices put in place by the program are sufficient to correct future discrepancies.

Tennessee Adult Ed. has made great efforts to align itself with its partners and continues to improve how services can be offered as to encourage co-enrollment, the training of Adult Ed. staff, and the monitoring of operations of the programs. We hope to be a program of continuous improvement.

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

The Division of Adult Education staff meets regularly to review performance data to identify successes and to target those areas in which performance is lower for additional professional development and technical assistance.

With the shift from WIA to WIOA reporting standards, Tennessee Adult Education has been able to address certain needs and changes with its data management system. The push to become better partners has allowed us to become integrated with the data from our Title I associates. This will allow for better analyzation of data, with hopes of increased service to participants in need by coenrolling them Title I.

A shifting focus in Tennessee is moving towards programs that assist a participant through an Integrated Education and Training program and increasing our assistance to participants by helping them transition seamlessly into postsecondary.

Tennessee has used this past year to review how we have been delivering services and determining success. It was determined that our focus needed to shift to meet new expectations of our state program. In shifting our focus from performance outcome numbers to the individual participants in our program, we have started a revitalization of our local programs efforts to make a difference in our students’ lives long after they leave our program.

The change in focus, as well as areas identified by technical assistance staff, provided us an opportunity to review our data management system for areas of needed improvements. We started continuously make modifications to meet clarifications/recommendations made to improve the accuracy of our data being reported.

We continue to evaluate the accuracy of our reporting system quarterly and anticipate improvement in our program performance and data quality over the coming year.

**Core Indicators of Performance**

This section reports on the evaluation of effectiveness of adult education and literacy activities based on core indicators of performance.

Performance Goal:

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| **Core Indicator Area** | **Goal** | **Performance** |
| ABE Beginning Literacy  | 47% | 39.69% |
| ABE Beginning Basic Ed. | 49% | 42.31% |
| ABE Intermediate Low | 42% | 39.47% |
| ABE Intermediate High | 18% | 20.62% |
| Adult Secondary Ed. Low | 15% | 28.70% |
| Adult Secondary Ed. High | 44% | 8.33% |
| ESL Literacy  | 44% | 37.25% |
| Low Beginning ESL | 50% | 50.75% |
| High Beginning ESL | 51% | 50.13% |
| Low Intermediate ESL | 42% | 48.40% |
| High Intermediate ESL | 47% | 35.09% |
| Advanced ESL Literacy | 47% | 17.68% |

Division of Adult Education staff review performance regularly, and target those areas in which performance is lower for additional professional development and technical assistance.

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

The State of Tennessee has made the decision and set the goal to have a presence in each American Job Center (AJC). As such, each grantee of an Adult Education contract is required to have a physical presence within comprehensive AJCs within the defined Districts of Adult Education. Having the physical presence within the AJCs allows for Adult Education staff the opportunity to provide instruction to co-enrolled individuals.

Concerning partner cooperation, each partner has a role within a comprehensive AJC in providing the services they were entrusted to provide. Adult Education operates and performs job fairs, orientations, classes, as well as administrative work that benefit all collocated partners. Relevant career services that we provide are orientations and assessing of participants coming into the AJCs. Tennessee is making the effort, and set the goal, to become better partners by learning about joint services that can be tied into current Adult Ed. services. By expanding our understanding we can create a service that is better tailored to assisting participants across WIOA.

While it has been challenging, local programs negotiated with the AJC operators to provide infrastructure funding from their 5% administrative funding. This has allowed for closer, more creative, relationships between partners, as well as demonstrates that Adult Education is a willing partner. These relationships will grow as programs become more comfortable with negotiations and understand how the partner relationships are expected to operate.

1. **Describe when your State held a competition [the latest competition] for IELCE program funds and the number of grants awarded by your State to support IELCE programs.**

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

**Describe how the State is progressing towards program goals of preparing and placing IELCE program participants in unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency as described in section 243(c)(1) and discuss any performance results, challenges, and lessons learned from implementing those program goals;**

**Describe how the State is progressing towards program goals of ensuring that IELCE program activities are integrated with the local workforce development system and its functions as described in section 243(c)(2) and discuss any performance results, challenges, and lessons learned from implementing those program goals.**

Tennessee held a competition for IELCE contracts in in 2015/2016 and awarded five (5) grants in order for IELCE services to be provided within areas that have high populations of immigrants. The purpose of awarding the grants to specified areas is to allocate funds where the need is greatest. There has been difficulty in paralleling IELCE programs alongside IETs because of language barriers. In essence, just getting individuals to a functioning level in the English language is an IET.

Improvements can and will be made in the area of IETs, once these improvements are in place the performance for employment placement would be expected to increase. With the increased involvement with partners under Title I, we aim to conduct more co-enrollments and referrals, translating into improved employment numbers for our participants. A challenge to this is tracking the individuals after exit. Tennessee focuses on data matching by wage files, but majority of these individuals do not have social security numbers to match. If individuals do move onto better employment it would prove difficult without conducting surveys, which increases operation costs.

With the greater involvement with partners via the American Job Center structure, we hope to help individuals across programs, which in turn increase the probability that the individual reaches unsubsidized employment. By creating a seamless service structure, participants can receive services that improve their skill set across the spectrum, from education to work training.

1. **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.**

No new State standards have been implemented.

**6. 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.**

In the most recent statewide study of recidivism, from 2010, 46 percent of people released from prison or jail in Tennessee were reincarcerated within three years. Dr. Mary Karpos, *Tennessee Department of Correction Recidivism Study Felon Releases 2001-2007* (Nashville, TN: Tennessee Department of Correction, 2010).

Tennessee Division of Adult Education has not had access to data to determine the relative rate of recidivism for criminal offenders served by AEFLA-funded programs. Recently, however, communication has been initiated and partnerships are being developed by the Division of Adult Education with the Tennessee Department of Corrections to explore the most effective ways to capture this data in the future.