

## Georgia Narrative Report 2017-2018

### Introduction

Georgia’s Office of Adult Education (GOAE) is a division of the Technical College System of Georgia—an entity that also includes Technical Education, Quick Start (the agency’s economic development arm), and, as of July 1, 2018, Workforce Development. The mission of the GOAE is, “to enable every adult learner in Georgia to acquire the necessary basic skills—reading, writing, computation, speaking, and listening—to compete successfully in today’s workplace, strengthen family foundations, and exercise full citizenship.”

Georgia’s current and future workforce necessitates a targeted and tactical approach to literacy, workforce preparation, and industry training. Approximately 1.1 million adults age 18 and over in Georgia have less than a high school credential. To meet this need in FY 2017-2018, GOAE awarded thirty-one (31) grants to local providers through a competitive process, for coverage in each of Georgia’s 159 counties. Grantees included twenty-two (22) technical colleges, five (5) community-based organizations, one (1) faith-based organization, and three (3) school districts. During FY 2017-2018, Georgia enrolled 41,074 students in adult education. Of these, 983 students had more than one Period of Participation (PoP), producing 42,057 total Periods of Participation.

State leadership activities within the GOAE are executed primarily by two entities: Instructional Services (IS) and Professional Development & Transition Resources (PDTR). The seven-member IS team provides oversight of program operations and performance to include data monitoring and program review. Further, they deliver technical assistance to local program administrators and staff, including training on policies and procedures, data collection/entry, reporting, and student assessment.

The PDTR team provides a variety of support services to local program administrators, staff, and instructors—to include the design, delivery and evaluation of research-based practices and professional development to increase the effectiveness of program management and instructional delivery. Additionally, the PDTR team provides technical assistance and training for local programs to support the work of the Transition Specialists.

#### **1. State Leadership Funds (AEFLA Section 223)**

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

- Alignment of adult 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 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).

(b) As applicable, describe how the State has used funds for additional permissible activities described in section 223(a)(2).

## **National Initiatives**

The GOAE is actively engaged in national priorities regarding adult education, policy regulations, and reporting requirements. Staff members participate in national forums and professional associations to connect with adult education administrators and leaders from other states, share best practices, and contribute to conversations that inform policy makers. GOAE leadership and staff participated in the following events during the year:

### **Building Opportunities through IELCE, November 2, 2017**

GOAE is participating in the Building Opportunities through Integrated English Language and Civics Education (IELCE) technical assistance project. State teams are assigned national coaches who deliver technical assistance and support through monthly calls. The project provides a platform for states to secure resources, share ideas, engage in peer learning and serve as a bridge between Manhattan Strategy Group and the participating members.

### **The National Training Institute (NTI), Charleston, SC, November 14-17, 2017**

The GOAE Leadership team attended the National Training Institute in November 2017. The NTI was designed as a deeper dive into subjects presented at the June 2017 State Directors' Meeting. The NTI addressed WIOA implementation on the roles and responsibilities of Adult Education as a required One-Stop Partner, workforce preparation as an allowable activity, Integrated Education and Training (IET), Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE), entrepreneurship development and implementation models.

### **Coalition on Adult Basic Education (COABE), Phoenix, AZ, March 25-28, 2018**

The GOAE System Office staff, local program leadership and faculty attended the COABE national conference, which provided opportunities to explore evidence-based instructional strategies and national best practices. While some local program personnel are able to attend COABE, many are not, so the GOAE uses this conference as the primary source for identifying national presenters to bring our state conference.

## **Statewide Initiatives**

GOAE's state professional development plan and technical assistance platform are based upon a statewide needs assessment with a focus on continuous improvement and compliance. The GOAE provided responsive and content-relevant technical assistance and professional development to address the needs of local providers, and to reinforce nationally recognized best practices, including:

### **Grant Compliance—Local Program Support**

A critical function of the GOAE is to provide support to local programs through training and technical assistance related to the grant requirements. The primary responsibility for this training and technical assistance falls upon the Instructional Services team. Throughout FY 2017-2018, online training was available to local providers related to the Assessment Policies and Procedures Manual, Assessment Policy Updates and Reminders, and the Intake Assessment Form. Assessment training for BEST Plus and BEST Literacy was also provided. Face-to-face targeted training was provided to programs that fell in the lower performance quartile the prior year and to other programs that identified a need for training. The team provided targeted

technical assistance related to program performance, grant compliance, instructional quality, student assessment, data collection, and reporting, and student recruitment/retention.

### **Data Management**

Data quality continued to be a focus during FY 2017-2018. The IS team conducted on-going desk monitoring of local program data, and maintained open communication and technical assistance to address data issues and program performance. As a part of ongoing technical assistance, the GOAE prioritized training that provided local programs with an in-depth understanding of data collection and reporting requirements under WIOA. Program administrators and teachers were trained via webinars. Additionally, program administrators and data managers were provided with targeted in-person training. The office's four Grant Program Support Coordinators delivered training specific to the understanding of Periods of Participation and NRS Table 4 across the state. In total, they led 38 different sessions, at a variety of times in the day, in order to give as many personnel possible the opportunity to attend. In all, 863 administrators, teachers, and staff members from local programs attended.

In order to foster the continuous improvement of data management processes, the GOAE took measures to redevelop the Student Intake Assessment Form. Further, staff began work to restructure the state's data management system, the Georgia Adult Learners Information System (GALIS), in order to capture the data elements necessary for current NRS requirements. The goal of this ongoing activity is to increase the effectiveness of the state's ability to generate fully compliant, accurate, and informative NRS and Joint Report data. Plans also include adding and revising local reports to foster continuous local performance improvement.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The GOAE conducted continuous data monitoring, site visits, and on-site program reviews to assess quality, to ensure compliance with federal and state policy, and to identify areas in which technical assistance was needed for program improvement. Specific attention was given to those programs with low performance, and targeted technical assistance was provided to help improve program outcomes. Three methods were used to provide monitoring and evaluation of program improvement activities.

1. Monitoring Visits – IS team members established a monitoring schedule for all programs. Lower-performing programs experienced an increased number of visits as compared to other programs. While making site visits, team members met with program administrators and/or staff, observed classroom instruction, evaluated facilities and technology, conducted financial reviews, and checked student records.
2. On-Site Program Reviews – GOAE continued its contract with the University of Georgia to provide logistical support and facilitation of the On-Site Program Review process. Six programs were identified from the state's monitoring cycle schedule. They were evaluated on the quality of instruction, adherence to policies and procedures, and the overall quality of program administration. GOAE provided a formal written report, and each program was asked to respond to areas that needed improvement.
3. Self-Assessment – GOAE required each local program to complete a formal self-assessment addressing all performance areas. Programs self-identified each area as either "Met

Requirements” or “Did not meet Requirements,” and provided comments. The self-assessments were reviewed by the assigned Grant Program Support Coordinator to determine the type of technical assistance needed.

## **Combined Statewide Professional Development (Administrative & Instructional)**

### **2017 Adult Education Fall Conference**

The 2017 Adult Education Fall Conference included tracks dedicated to the core adult education subjects (math, reading and writing instruction), as well as supporting tracks to provide instructors with focused professional development (PD) in the areas of student accommodations, integrating technology into the classroom, classroom management, and the challenges and opportunities of WIOA implementation in rural areas. Program leaders continued to receive professional development on the implementation of WIOA.

### **EAGLE Leadership Event**

FY 2017-2018 marked the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the EAGLE (Exceptional Adult Georgian in Literacy Education) Awards program. The event included highlights from years past and a visit from prior EAGLE Ambassadors, who recounted their successes that began when they started attending adult education classes. The keynote speakers were two previous EAGLE ambassadors whose lives continue to show the positive impact of adult education on both individuals and their communities.

## **Adult Educator Professional Development**

### **Standards in Adult Education Online Course**

The National Center for Families Learning (NCFL) continued the delivery of the online foundational standards training used as a pre-requisite to the standards face-to-face training workshops. *Unit One: Understanding the College and Career Readiness Standards* and *Unit Two: Using the Standards in Adult Education* continue to provide instructors with the foundation to understand and integrate standards into their adult educational practices.

### **Standards-Based Education Workshop Series – Part 1 of 3**

Fall 2017 marked the launch of the state’s three-year College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) roll out. The CCRS Part One workshops provided instructors with the skills needed to review and align classroom and online materials to the standards.

### **Transitions Summit**

The Fall Transitions Summit provided Transition Specialists information regarding WIOA and its impact on student transition. Each workshop highlighted a different aspect of the law, including “The Role of the Transition Specialist and One-Stop Services,” “A Working Partnership: Workforce Development and Central Georgia Tech,” and “Coordinating with Special Population Services on TCSG Campuses.” The afternoon was spent reinforcing presentation techniques and providing guidance on building a Transition Services Library.

## **ESL & IELCE Summit**

The Winter ESL & IELCE Summit exposed instructors to Project Integrated Digital English Acceleration (I-DEA). I-DEA is designed to teach English language skills in the context of college and careers for learners who face the largest language gaps. Unlike traditional approaches, in which learners are expected to learn English before pursuing college or job training, I-DEA teaches English in tandem with college and career skills. Students quickly learn skills relevant to their lives and careers. The Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges provided the training.

## **Adult Educator Institutes**

The Spring 2018 Adult Educator Institutes included workshops that focused on the key instructional areas of teaching scientific inquiry, incorporating informational text, and evidenced based writing. Additionally, instructors received support in the areas of helping students to engage in productive dialogues and whole group classroom conversations.

## **Program Administrator Professional Development**

### **FY 2017-2018 Operations Meeting**

The FY 2017-2018 Operations Meeting built upon the foundation set the prior year. The meeting was structure around the 13 considerations that underpin WIOA. Each presentation combined discussion and activities that reinforced the information. Program Administrators presented a session titled “Considerations in Action” where they discussed how they were collaborating with core partners and how they were integrating the 13 considerations into their programs. The meeting ended with OAE updates and next steps.

### **Quarterly Meetings with GOAE Leadership**

Quarterly meetings provide Program Administrators with governance and leadership support in the areas of program improvement, data management, and leadership development. The Operations meeting was the first in the series and was used to provide budget, policy and procedure, and organizational information needed for the upcoming year. The second quarter meeting was held during the Fall Conference. This meeting offered a session on how to be a good Workforce Board member, a TABE 11&12 update, and a presentation about a new TCSG initiative, “Behavioral Intervention,” which provides intervention support to students who are in crisis. The third quarter meeting was held in conjunction with the EAGLE Leadership Event. It included updates from the GOAE and a review of the grant renewal process. The fourth quarter meeting was held in conjunction with the TCSG Leadership Summit and included opportunities for the local programs to share best practices, receive an update on the future integration of the Workforce Development division under the TCSG umbrella, and hear GOAE news and updates.

## **Special Initiatives**

### **Certified Literate Community Program (CLCP)**

Within the Certified Literate Community Program, a community establishes an independent non-profit collaborative that mobilizes local resources to address the twin challenges of limited funding and recruiting adult students in greater numbers. This partnership among business,

education, and government makes literacy a community-wide commitment that has helped children, families and workers improve their literacy levels. The partnerships have resulted in successful public awareness campaigns and fund development. Eighty-seven counties and 2 cities have been certified by the State Board of the Technical College System of Georgia as CLCPs. Forty-eight counties and 1 city are CLCP Participants (first level of certification), and 39 counties and 1 city are Certified Literate Communities (second level of certification). CLCP participants are currently working toward a collective goal of serving 226,070 individuals. The Certified Literate Communities made the collective commitment to serve 202,477 and went on to serve 257,365 to date. Every CLC exceeded its goal, and most did it in less than 10 years. Annually, CLCPs now secure over \$1.6 million in donations and in-kind resources. For FY2017-2018,, 1,226 CLCP volunteers have donated 30,550 hours of service and 313 tutors have provided 13,136 hours of volunteer tutoring. CLCPs have sponsored over 409 literacy awareness events.

### **Georgia WIOA Convening**

The 2017 WorkSource Georgia WIOA Convening brought together core WIOA partners and others involved in strengthening Georgia’s workforce. The workshops were designed to provide workforce development strategies and best practices to improve the State of Georgia workforce system as well provide an opportunity for networking and relationship building. Sessions included “The Workforce Development-Adult Education Bond,” “Opportunity Youth: Who Are They and Where Do They Live?” and “Measuring Performance: Mastering WIOA Reporting.”

### **2. Performance Data Analysis**

Describe how the adult education program performed in the overall assessment of core programs based on 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.

While Georgia has steadily increased its overall educational gain benchmark performance over the last four years, FY 2017-2018 was considered a year of transition for the state, as we all learned more about WIOA implementation and performance accountability. First, training and education occurred at the state level. Then state staff were able to communicate relevant WIOA information to local providers, including an explanation of performance indicators. This update made major changes to GALIS, including the ability for students to have more than one period of participation during a fiscal year. These structural changes made it easier to implement the NRS Table business rules and increased the overall speed and usability of the system.

Some local program performance reports could not be updated in FY2017-2018, which sometimes kept local programs from having a full picture of their current performance. GOAE plans to improve local program performance and outcomes in FY2018-2019 by making sure that all available GALIS reports are fully aligned to WIOA reporting standards and by creating new program management reports that will make it easier for local programs, and the state, to monitor performance.

### **Adult Education Awards**

The GOAE honored local programs for achievements in a variety of areas as a part of the Georgia Adult Education Fall Conference. Awards were presented to programs for meeting all Measurable Skill Gains benchmarks, growth in enrollment, greatest number of students awarded citizenship, highest GED completion percentage, and the greatest use of volunteers.

### **Improvement Plans**

In FY 2017-2018, one local program was on a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) due to noncompliance state and federal policies related to fiscal management. In addition to the corrective action plan that was required, the program was monitored more frequently and more comprehensively.

Because they missed 50% of their educational targets for the prior fiscal year two programs were on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) during FY 2017-2018. In addition to submitting plans to improve performance, the programs had to identify a performance improvement team, identify reasons for prior low performance and develop actions to improve performance. Additionally, these programs were required to host a performance-related training by GOAE and submit quarterly updates.

### **3. 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.

### **One-Stop Infrastructure and Other Shared Costs**

The GOAE went through a competitive grant process at the end of the 2016-2017 fiscal year, which was at the same time that the 19 local workforce areas were negotiating MOUs for the infrastructure and other shared costs for the One-Stops. While GOAE intended for the negotiation process to be a local process, we could not allow the grantees at the time to negotiate agreements concurrently with the grant competition process and in advance of a formal grant/contract for local services. Therefore, the GOAE designated its Director of Instructional Services as the negotiator for all of the local areas. The Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) and the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA) also had state level personnel to negotiate in all local areas. State level representation from these groups, combined with the guidance issued the state's workforce division, was beneficial to the process because the expectations were both new and confusing to personnel in the local areas.

Once the competitive grant process ended and the grantees for FY 2017-FY 2020 were identified, the GOAE passed along the responsibilities for the One-Stop agreements to the local providers. However, because there is not alignment between the 19 local workforce service areas and the 31 adult education service delivery areas, and because many of the AE providers operate across multiple workforce areas, the GOAE designated a primary provider to fulfill the responsibilities and commitments for the comprehensive One-Stop in each local area. The selection of the primary provider was based upon which provider had a program in the county

and/or city where the comprehensive One-Stop was located. In the metro Atlanta area, where multiple providers may serve a city/county, the longest standing comprehensive services provider (ABE, IELCE, Corrections, etc.) was taken into account.

While the GOAE felt it best to designate a primary provider that would be responsible for fulfilling the expectations outlined in the MOU, we also charged all grantees with One-Stop engagement. The following assurance was part of the application process and had to be agreed to by all applicants.

“The Grantee agrees to have some “direct linkage” to the adult education services within the one-stop centers in the assigned area. A “direct linkage” means providing direct connection at the one-stop center, within a reasonable time, by phone or through a real-time Web-based communication to a program staff member who can provide program information or services to the customer (student). A “direct linkage” cannot exclusively be providing a phone number or computer Web site or providing information, pamphlets, or materials.”

Due to the One-Stop space limitations, many adult education providers are not physically co-located, which means that career services requirements are fulfilled via direct linkage connections. Customers who come into the One-Stop center are able to connect with our providers to get enrolled in classes, which includes the basic skills assessment and any needed referrals to other partners as may be identified during the intake, assessment, or instruction phases. Three of our providers are co-located within the One-Stop for classes and, in one instance, the One-Stop sits within the program’s campus footprint.

Since this was the first year of shared infrastructure costs, the GOAE held a reserve of funds to cover the costs. Most One-Stops reconciled expenses quarterly and billed at the end of the year (June 30). In some instances, the GOAE paid the bill directly with the reserve, and in some cases, the funds were passed along to the designated adult education provider for the area to pay the costs. It is important to note that moving forward the obligation to negotiate and pay these costs will be the responsibility of the local provider.

### **Vocational Rehabilitation Joint Meeting**

TCSG OAE and Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency held a joint statewide meeting. The meeting provided:

- Activities that encouraged attendees to meet and network within and across regions;
- An opportunity for identification and clarification of any myths or misconceptions surrounding each organization; and
- Information about each institution’s organizational structure and explanation of the processes used to determine client eligibility for services and resources.

Participants reported that the meeting provided them with increased knowledge, awareness, and a wealth of resources.

#### **4. Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) Program (AEFLA Section 243)**

Describe how the state is using funds under Section 243 to support the following activities under the IELCE program:

- \* Describe when your State held a competition (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 requirements to provide IELCE services in combination with the 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; and
- \* 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.

In Spring 2017, the GOAE held a competition for the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) funds for FY 2018-FY2020. Grant applications were evaluated based upon factors such as the provider's previous performance in offering Adult Education and English Language/Civics Education; the understanding of the provider of the need for IELCE-related services at the local level; and the provider's ability to align its services with local workforce strategies. As a result, ten (10) local providers were awarded IELCE grants, for services to begin on July 1, 2017. The grantees included six technical colleges, three community-based organizations, and one faith-based organization. Through these programs, 4,558 participants have been served in IELCE classes.

The GOAE provided training to local providers on the requirements and expectations for implementing Integrated Education and Training (IET) into Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE). Additionally, local providers were included in the Georgia WIOA Convening—a conference involving Georgia's WIOA partners and related providers. Providers were able to attain an in-depth understanding of how IET fits into local workforce networks.

The 2017-2018 fiscal year was the first year of funding for IELCE under the WIOA requirements. All applicants/grantees for these funds had been EL/Civics grantees under WIA. In an effort to delineate the expected changes for this funding, the GOAE competed the Section 243 funds separately, focusing on key aspects of the requirements of this award that differed from the WIOA legislation. While IELCE was the only funding stream to require IET, GOAE opted to require all grantees, regardless of funding stream, to offer IET opportunities. In fact, one of the assurances that all grantees agreed to is:

- As described in WIOA, the program will align activities to the Local Workforce Development Plan for WIOA providers, collaborate to provide supportive services, and partner to promote concurrent enrollment with Title I programs.

That being said, this year focused on educating all grantees, including the Section 243 providers, on the requirements of IET. GOAE charged the grantees with connecting with the core partners in the areas they served to identify appropriate training opportunities and funding sources for IET. This included the requirement for grantees to attend the workforce

board meetings for their areas as well as the one-stop partner meetings. While our Section 243 grantees did excellent work under the requirements of WIA, meeting the requirements of WIOA has been a challenge that continues. Grantees are at various stages of implementing the full requirements as outlined in WIOA, and our office continues to provide guidance, professional development, and technical assistance.

GOAE also provided assessment training for *BEST Plus* and *BEST Literacy* that benefited the IELCE program. This included:

- 6 BEST Plus Test Administrator sessions (6 hours each), 74 participants;
- 2 BEST Plus Scoring Refresher trainings (4 hours each), 7 participants; and
- 2 BEST Literacy Administration and Scoring trainings (3 hours each), 62 participants.

#### **4. Adult Education Standards**

If your state has adopted new challenging K-12 standards under title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended, describe how your Adult Education content standards are aligned with those K-12 standards.

Optional- Describe implementation efforts, challenges, and any lessons learned.

GOAE continued its efforts to effectively implement AE standards by again offering the prerequisite seven-week online standards classes developed and facilitated by the National Center for Families Learning. Continued exposure to the standards was achieved through workshops, presentations, and various speakers and presenters. Standards-based training was offered at the various professional development events throughout the year. Lastly, the three-year rollout plan was shared with program leaders with the expectation that full statewide implementation would begin in FY 2017-2018.

#### **5. 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.

The *Report of the Georgia Council on Criminal Justice Reform (2015)* documented Georgia's recidivism rate at 27%. Responding to the report, the state has increased its efforts to address the efficacy of re-entry efforts and related services. With regard to the education of incarcerated individuals, it is notable that the Georgia Department of Corrections has a distinct and independently funded education program for inmates. Since GDC's funds are not enough to serve all inmates and all facilities, Adult Education local providers support these efforts by offering classes in prisons, local jails, day reporting centers, and substance abuse centers. Adult education services were provided to 3,860 correctional students throughout the state. Of this total, 2,128 of the correctional students enrolled made at least one measurable skill gain in their first Period of Participation. Overall, correctional students earned 2,144 measurable skill gains in 3,930 PoPs.