

## Oregon Narrative Report 2017-18

### 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 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).*

The State ABS Director actively participates in the Governor’s Workforce Systems Executive Team and attends the monthly Oregon Workforce Partnership meetings (which are comprised of the Directors of the Local Workforce Boards). In addition, the State ABS Team participated in the development of the Infrastructure Cost Sharing Agreements and the WorkSource Oregon (WSO) Operational Standards which provide guidance on the operations of Oregon’s OneStop Centers.

The Oregon Council of Adult Basic Skills Development (OCABSD) meet quarterly. A portion of these meetings are dedicated to understanding Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) performance requirements, Integrated Education and Training (IET), and Integrated English Language and Civics Education (IELCE).

The Higher Education Coordinating Commission Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD) regularly engaged adult education and literacy providers in planning and preparation for implementation of WIOA. CCWD continued to support discussion and information dissemination with the state’s adult education and literacy providers.

CCWD staff provided state planning updates during quarterly OCABSD meetings, monthly planning and policy updates, and weekly phone calls for providers and other interested parties to facilitate discussion about WIOA implementation.

OCABSD members discussed state and local planning, sharing perspectives on alignment with learning standards, program delivery, and data policies. Specific topics included a statewide definition of career pathways and the implications of data changes. CCWD prioritized state leadership funding to support projects that advanced WIOA implementation, such as planning associated with the Oregon Adult Learning Standards to onboard new staff, involve more part-time faculty and staff, expand the online professional development platform, and explore additional IET programming.

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

#### Professional Development

Professional development is an area of continuous focus and importance in Oregon. In 2017-2018, CCWD engaged program directors, data professionals, administrators, and faculty trainers in a series of training events entitled the “Oregon Leadership Academy” (OLA). Three of the four 2017-18 trainings were offered face-to-face over a two-day period and coincided with quarterly meetings of OCABSD. The fourth training was a virtual workshop including presentations, videos, and the study of research papers. All four events required preparatory reading and follow-up assignments. The presenters included

members of the State ABS Team and professional trainers with specific expertise in Adult Education and WIOA requirements. Topics covered included the analysis of data for federal reporting, IET Career Infusion, and the researched-based exploration of teaching and learning.

CCWD also offered an online Orientation to Oregon Adult Learning Standards, via Blackboard, in the fall quarter of 2017, and a six-hour, in-person training for programs using the BEST Plus 2.0 speaking skills assessment (April 2018). All programs and faculty were given access (via Blackboard) to a self-paced training module focusing on the needs of adult learners which was specifically designed by faculty trainers under contract to CCWD.

In addition to the above trainings, professional development updates are a standing agenda item for OCABSD meetings. Topics in the past year have included IET planning, the implementation of national and state adult learning standards, and how to facilitate the Professional Learning Communities which, since 2018, have been a requirement of all programs.

ABS Directors received additional training in 2017-18, delivered through conference calls and online formats. For example, an Oregon-Specific CASAS training was delivered via webinar in order to introduce the new Reading GOALS assessments.

In March of 2018 CCWD acquired large-group membership of Coalition on Adult Basic Education (COABE) for all Title II programs in Oregon, thereby giving faculty and staff access to a wide range of professional development resources and webinars. CCWD also registered for COABE's virtual conference in October 2017, thus permitting programs to participate in real-time conference presentations or access archived recordings.

Assessment Certification Training. Oregon requires state certification in order to administer and score state-approved assessment tools for state and federal reporting. State assessment certification comprises the completion of CASAS Implementation Training (online) and familiarization with Oregon assessment policies and procedures as published in the ABS Policy Manual. During 2017-18, the State ABS Team facilitated test administrator training for CASAS e-Tests, TOPSpro Enterprise, and BEST Plus 2.0. One hundred ten practitioners from Title II programs and the Department of Corrections were certified for these assessments. CASAS recertification is required every four years through the CASAS Online training modules I and II. BEST Plus 2.0 recalibration – which is the responsibility of local programs - is required annually.

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

During the 2017-18 reporting period, CCWD engaged in a variety of technical assistance activities that occurred both in person and remotely. These activities included facilitating research-based and responsive trainings at the OLA, attending the OCABSD quarterly conferences, site visits, a provider specific Program Improvement Plan process, as well as regular web conferences with both ABS directors and ABS data professionals from across the state.

CCWD continued to participate in quarterly OCABSD meetings, bringing together ABS directors and ABS staff. These meetings often dovetailed with OLA, where high-quality trainings were delivered to provider level ABS Directors and data professionals. In July of 2017, the State ABS Director and Research Analyst delivered a data focused training to provider level data professionals. This training shared methods for cleaning, analyzing, and submitting data. At the October 2017 OLA, ABS directors

were trained in how to draw actionable conclusions from data sets, with a focus on data pertaining to measurable skill gain (MSG) rates across student sub-categories, as well as data pertaining to retention rates.

From December 2017 to March of 2018, the State ABS Director traveled to complete site visits with each of Oregon's seventeen providers with a focus on key program strengths as well as areas for improvement, noting strategies that could be useful for each program going forward.

After the site visits, the State ABS Team also supported ABS providers in utilizing a self-assistance monitoring tool. This tool, known as the Program Improvement Process (PIP), gave providers a series of risk assessment measures with which they evaluated their own programs. Measures focused on a wide range of program strengths and areas for improvement that were likely to impact students, including changes in key program personnel, implementation of new Title II strategies, and alignment with the Oregon Adult Learning Standards. Following each provider's own assessment, the State ABS Team conducted their own analysis using the same measures and then met with provider level ABS directors and staff to share findings and highlight areas for improvement.

Throughout the year, monthly conference calls were held for data professionals, with a focus on data integrity and performance reporting, and an additional set of monthly calls were held for provider level ABS directors.

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

In 2017-18, in addition to evaluation and monitoring of program expenditures, CCWD continued quarterly data audits, which included an evaluation of program performance in targeted areas. This monitoring and evaluation has allowed CCWD to identify areas in which there are needs for additional technical assistance and professional development.

As a result of the monitoring and evaluation conducted in 2017-18 (including the aforementioned provider self-assessments and program improvement plans), the State ABS Team identified areas where targeted technical assistance could be helpful. Areas for technical assistance and improvement included post-testing percentages and strategies for meeting measurable skill gain targets.

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

Oregon uses an approach to Adult Basic Skills (ABS) professional development administered through workshops, conferences, certification, special projects, and technical assistance. Content and format of services are updated to incorporate new research and promising practices in the field. In 2017, the State Leadership Coordinator began a new comprehensive planning process to develop a framework for professional development. Two temporary staff positions were also funded to assist with WIOA implementation, including professional development requirements. CCWD continued to facilitate development of workshops and training and manage logistics. CCWD also encouraged and funded attendance by state and local program staff at multiple national conferences, for example COABE, and other events such as state director meetings, and the National Association of State Directors of Adult Education (NASDAE) National Training Institute. State and local program staff also attended trainings

related to the alignment of national and state learning standards, and National Reporting System (NRS) trainings in order to enhance continued data improvement efforts.

These activities build on previous leadership activities in carrying out the objectives of the state plan in support of continuous program improvement and professional development to enhance Adult Basic Skills (ABS) in Oregon.

## 2. Performance Data Analysis

*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.*

Oregon increased the number of levels in which it met targets from five in 2016-2017 to eight in 2017-2018, including meeting or exceeding federal targets in all six Adult Basic Education (ABE) levels.

Educational Functioning Level	2016-2017 Actual Performance	2017-2018 Performance		Change from 2016-2017 Actual Performance
		Goal	Actual	
ABE Level 1	42%	45%	45%*	+3%
ABE Level 2	46%	43%	50%*	+4%
ABE Level 3	38%	38%	45%*	+7%
ABE Level 4	36%	32%	41%*	+5%
ABE Level 5	50%	32%	54%*	+4%
ASE Level 6	39%	43%	47%*	+8%
<b>ABE/ASE Total</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>45%</b>		<b>+5%</b>
ESL Level 1	35%	43%	39%	+4%
ESL Level 2	39%	55%	50%	+11%
ESL Level 3	45%	56%	57%*	+12%
ESL Level 4	34%	45%	42%	+8%
ESL Level 5	34%	41%	42%*	+8%
ESL Level 6	16%	23%	20%	+4%
<b>ESL Total</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>42%</b>		<b>+9%</b>

\*Met or exceeded federal targets

Overall, performance in ABE/ASE measurable skill gains improved by 5% in 2017-2018. The largest performance improvements were in ABE Level 3, with a 7% performance increase, and Level 6 with an 8% performance increase. These improvements are due, in part, to the inclusion of earning a secondary school diploma or its equivalent in the measurable skill gain calculation. Additionally, during the 2017-18 program year, the State ABS Team intentionally emphasized professional development opportunities for programs across the state, including a renewed focus on data integrity encouraging programs to take a holistic approach to classroom and program improvements. Feedback from program directors also provided insight into performance increases:

1. Applying adult learning techniques with regard to group work where adults learn better and share information;
2. Having dedicated, engaged faculty who are motivated by learning standards and approved testing methods;
3. Serving smaller class sizes with, likely, more motivated participants receiving more individual attention.

In addition, the percentage of participants achieving measurable skill gains in ESL increased by 9% between 2016-2017 and 2017-2018. Performance met or exceeded federal targets in ESL Levels 3 and 5. While federal targets were not met in the remaining ESL Levels, performance gains were attained in all ESL Levels, including 11% performance increase in Level 2 and 8% increases in Levels 4 and 5. Gains in performance could be attributed to innovative ways programs are developing to engage students, including social events to help students feel connected to the college, learn about resources, and discuss next steps. Additionally, one program has seen positive results with taking the classroom into the community, delivering curriculum where students feel the most comfortable. Other programs have seen success with a change in course and supplemental materials, consistent with state standards and approved testing methods, with life skills activities, test preparation tips, and unit tests. Performance below federal targets could be attributed to a difference in priorities: the student priority is to become more proficient in the English language, primarily focused on conversational speaking and reading, while program measurement tools in math and reading do not have a method to measure increases in speaking ability.

Oregon has used performance to determine a portion of program funding since 2009. The factors in the formula include enrollment, EFL gain, obtaining and retaining employment, entering postsecondary education, and the number of federal targets achieved. Performance was also a consideration in the competition for WIOA Title II funds for 2017-2019. Applicants were required to:

- Report on past effectiveness in performance indicators.
- Provide documentation of achievements and activities that demonstrated capacity and expertise to in delivering adult education and literacy activities.
- Commit to local MSG performance targets for 2018-2019. Applicants were required to justify any targets that were below state targets.

Oregon intends to continue future performance increases through several activities:

- Continue publishing an annual ABS Policy Manual which clarifies procedures for assessment, data collection, and data management.
- Implementing a monitoring process that addresses both risk management and program improvement, as well as performance monitoring of Title II targets set by grantees in their applications. Grantees will be required to provide specific improvement plans for any targets not achieved.
- Continuing a strong statewide focus on data quality through quarterly data audits and monthly calls with local provider data professionals.
- Developing a new funding formula to be implemented in 2019-2020. One consideration for the revised formula will be to increase the portion of funds awarded based on performance.

- Continuing the OLA, which proved to be a success and has been extended for another year, to emphasize MSG, improving post-testing rates, and continued use of data for program improvement at the local level.

### **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.*

Oregon’s ABS programs have been actively engaged in integration with one-stop partners. This engagement occurs at the state level through membership and participation at the state Workforce System Executive Team which includes representation from all WIOA Titles, Department of Human Services Self-Sufficiency programs, and the Governor’s Office of Labor and Workforce Policy.

*Describe the applicable career services that are provided in the one-stop system.*

CCWD has entered into Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with all nine of Oregon’s Workforce areas on behalf of local Title II providers. These MOUs provide a baseline for access to Title II activities, including career services, and defines cost-sharing responsibilities.

*Describe how infrastructure costs are supported through State and local options.*

At the local level, Title II programs are engaged in the coordination of services, programs, and funding with WSO partners to ensure accountability and alignment in support of a seamless public system. This is achieved through local Title II providers’ participation in Local Workforce Boards and Local Leadership Teams.

### **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 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; 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.*

Oregon awarded Section 243 funds to four providers as of July 1, 2017. The awards were made separately from the Comprehensive Grants. Grantees committed to offer IET activities and to collaborate with the local workforce system as defined in the final regulations.

As the State ABS Team continues its work to prepare and place IELCE program participants in employment opportunities that lead to economic self-sufficiency, communication and collaboration between the four IELCE providers continues. Using the quarterly OCABSD meetings and the monthly Directors Calls as a forum, the state team helped facilitate the sharing of promising practices. This collaboration is an ongoing process. In addition, the State ABS Team and one of the IELCE providers (Mt Hood Community College) are actively engaged in the Expanding Opportunities Technical Assistance calls. Information gained from these conversations was (and continues to be) shared with the local providers.

The State ABS Director meets with the Directors of the Local Workforce Boards in an effort to gain continued alignment and address challenges associated with program implementation both at the state and local level.

As part of the evaluation process of the IECLE program, the State ABS Team is considering re-competition of Section 243 funds for the 2018-2019 Program Year in order to solicit additional providers in an effort to expand program offerings to other workforce areas.

## **5. 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 Page 4 of 5 standards are aligned with those K-12 standards.*

*• Optional – Describe implementation efforts, challenges, and any lessons learned.*

The Oregon ABS Learning Standards Initiative, adopted by OCABSD in April 2010, reflects a common vision of what adults need to know and be able to do in the areas of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and math to carry out their life goals and purposes. Oregon's ABS Learning Standards are contained in a Learning Standard Framework, which provides detailed information for instruction, and are organized by educational functioning levels (EFLs) as defined by the US Department of Education, Office of Career Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE) and reported through NRS. Additionally, the Oregon ABS Learning Standards are aligned with the College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards of the Common Core State Standards. In 2014, on the advice of OCTAE, CCWD undertook a project to align the Oregon Adult Learning Standards with the CCR Standards for Adult Education in order to ensure that adults are ready to transition to a career and/or postsecondary education and training upon exit from ABS. OCTAE recommended several national experts who were well-versed in the CCR standards to perform gap analyses and identify where the Oregon Adult Learning Standards Frameworks needed to increase rigor,

focus, and scope. These national experts drafted revised frameworks which teams of Oregon standards experts then finalized and published. Experienced Oregon Learning Standards trainers then recreated the existing professional development structures for the Learning Standards to incorporate the revised standards, the use of technology, and a clearer focus on careers and work readiness. The newly aligned Oregon Adult Learning Standards, adopted by OCABSD, became effective July 1, 2016. Training for faculty and administrators on the aligned Oregon Adult Learning Standards began in July 2016 and is offered on an ongoing basis.

## **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.*

Of the 2844 learners served by the Department of Corrections Title II-funded programs in PY2017-18, 744 earned a GED certificate. Of those, 291 were released from incarceration and 3, or 1.03%, have been re-incarcerated.