Georgia Narrative Report 2018-2019

Introduction

Georgia's Office of Adult Education (GOAE) is a division of the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG)—an entity that also includes Technical Education, Quick Start (the agency's economic development arm), and, as of July 1, 2018, Workforce Development (also called WorkSource Georgia). 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 ages 18 and over in Georgia have less than a high school credential. To meet this need in fiscal year (FY) 2018-2019, GOAE awarded 31 grants through a competitive process to local providers who cumulatively serve each of Georgia's 159 counties. Grantees include 22 technical colleges, 4 community-based organizations, 1 faith-based organization, 3 school districts, and 1 housing authority. During FY 2018-2019, Georgia enrolled 37,980 students in adult education. Of these, 944 students had more than one Period of Participation (PoP), culminating in 38,924 total Periods of Participation.

State leadership activities within the GOAE are executed primarily by the Assistant Commissioner, Instructional Services (IS) team, Professional Development & Transition Resources (PDTR) team, High School Equivalency team, Community Outreach team, a Director of Accountability, and a Director of Research.

The IS team delivers technical assistance to local program administrators and staff, including training on policies and procedures, data collection/entry, reporting, and student assessment. The PDTR team designs and delivers research-based professional development to increase the effectiveness of program management, instructional delivery, and career services. The High School Equivalency team manages the state's GED administration and works to establish other high school equivalency offerings. The Community Outreach team manages external partnerships that support adult education and literacy activities in Georgia. The Director of Accountability oversees program operations and performance through monitoring and program review, and the Director of Research oversees data collection, data quality, and program evaluation.

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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);

Alignment with Other One-Stop Required Partners

WorkSource Georgia Academy
The Fall 2018 WorkSource Georgia Academy 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 Georgia's workforce system, as well provide an opportunity for networking and relationship building. GOAE staff not only attended the academy, but also took an active role in the development of the event. Additionally, both local and state staff co-presented at four breakout sessions, including: "Business Services and TCSG Economic Development: How Can We Partner?," "MOU Cost Negotiations: Lessons Learned," "Serving English Language Learners: Partnering to Provide Workforce Training and Support," and "One-Stop MOU: Monitoring, Best Practices, and Next Steps."

Transitions Summit
The Fall 2018 Transitions Summit allowed Transition Specialists to learn more about WIOA collaborative partners and programs. Summit presenters covered topics including "Childcare and Parent Service availability in Georgia" and "What's New with Apprenticeships and WIOA: Highlights of the Law and Specifics Transition Specialists Need to Know." Specialists were also certified in QPR (Question, Persuade, and Refer) Suicide Prevention Training. Transition Specialists were able to meet and network with representatives from the Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) and WorkSource Georgia.

High Quality Professional Development Programs

GOAE's state professional development plan and technical assistance platform are based upon an annual statewide needs assessment with a focus on continuous improvement and compliance. During FY 2018-2019, GOAE provided responsive and content-relevant professional development to improve instruction, address the needs of local providers, and reinforce nationally recognized best practices.

Combined Statewide Professional Development (Administrative & Instructional)

- Adult Education Fall Conference: The 2018 Adult Education Fall Conference was designed based upon 2018-2019 Needs Assessment data gathered from instructors and program leaders statewide. 420 instructors and adult education leaders attended the conference. There were 58 sessions dedicated to either core adult education subjects (math, reading, and writing instruction), or subjects in the areas of student persistence, integrating technology into the classroom, student accommodations, and career pathways. Key findings from conference evaluations (using a five-point Likert scale where 1 indicated "poor" and 5 indicated "excellent") included:

- o The average rating for "ability to transfer what was presented and use at work" was 4.65.
  - o The average rating for "overall usefulness of the information provided" was 4.63.
- EAGLE Leadership Event: The EAGLE (Exceptional Adult Georgian in Literacy Education) Awards program recognized the top adult education students from across the state. These outstanding students are selected through a statewide competition and are charged with representing and advocating for Adult Education across the state of Georgia. In its 26th year, the EAGLE event provided leadership development and career planning workshops to EAGLE delegates and attendees.

Adult Educator Professional Development

- Standards in Adult Education Online Course: The National Center for Families Learning (NCFL) revamped the online foundational standards course, *Understanding the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS),* to include information on the English Language Proficiency Standards. GOAE uses this course as the pre-requisite for all Standards face-to-face training workshops so that all instructors (Adult Basic and Secondary Education and English as a Second Language) are grounded in a basics of the CCRS and ELPS.
- Standards-Based Education Workshop Series – Part 2 of 3: The state continued the rollout of College and Career Readiness Standards training in 2018. The three year roll out began in FY 2017-2018 with the CCRS Part One workshops, which provided instructors with the skills needed to review and align classroom and online materials to the standards. CCRS Part Two introduced instructors to standards-based instruction and contextualized learning. The workshops provided an overview of the Career and Employment Clusters, Career Pathways, and Integrated Education and Training. Instructors had the opportunity to integrate workforce activities into a standards-based curriculum and design learner assessments to check for understanding.
- English as a Second Language (ESL) & Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) Summit: The Winter ESL & IELCE Summit workshops were planned around 2018 Needs Assessment data from ESL instructors from across the state. The instructors identified the need for leveled content that focused on WIOA, integration of standards into the ESL classroom, and instructional best practices. Workshop topics included "Engaging Classroom Activities for the Intermediate Level Language Learner", "ELLs and Job Readiness: Helping Students Gain 'Work Readiness Skills' that are Crucial for finding Employment," and "Integrate the English Language Proficiency Standards for Adult Education with Ease by Differentiating Instruction." The Spring Summit focused on technology tools and resources, including a session on *Learning Upgrade*, an application that makes learning accessible through various technology platforms including cell phones.
- Adult Educator Institutes: The Adult Educator Institutes focused on the high impact indicators in mathematical reasoning, teaching informational text skills, and incorporating cognitive biases in writing assignments. Instructors were provided reflection activities that were designed to help instructors reflect on key lessons and how to apply them in the classroom, as well as serve as classroom tools to help students apply their own learning.

Program Administrator Professional Development

- FY 2018-2019 Operations Meeting: The FY 2018-2019 Operations Meeting introduced the new Career Services Tool and provided additional training on the development of strong Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs. Administrators engaged in an activity where they shared the numerous career pathways being considered for IET development and the developmental stage of each program's IET. There was also a session on the definition and creation of the Single Set of Learning Objectives (SSLO) with an emphasis on the role the SSLO's play in IET development. The meeting ended with GOAE 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 throughout the year. The Operations meeting provided instruction and guidance on the Career Services Tool, IET/SSLO development, and organizational information needed for the upcoming year. A Program Administrator Leadership Academy was held in conjunction with the 2018 Fall Conference. The topics included "Retention and Motivation of Students" and "Creating a Career-Infused Program." The third quarter meeting was held in conjunction with the EAGLE Leadership Event and again focused on developing IET programs and SSLO's. 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.

Technical Assistance

Grant Compliance—Local Program Support
One of GOAE's critical functions 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 (IS) team. Throughout FY 2018-2019, local providers participated in online training related to the Policies and Procedures Manual, Assessment Policy Updates and Reminders, and the Intake Assessment Form. The IS team also provided assessment training for BEST Plus and BEST Literacy. Programs placed on a Performance Improvement Plan received face-to-face targeted training. The team provided targeted technical assistance related to program performance, grant compliance, instructional quality, student assessment, data collection, reporting, and student recruitment/retention.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Data Management
Data quality continued to be a focus during FY 2018-2019. 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, GOAE continued to prioritize training that provided local programs with an in-depth

understanding of data collection and reporting requirements under WIOA. The designated Data Manager from each local program attended face-to-face training that focused on how to manage local user accounts and permissions, how to conduct training with local program personnel, and introduced an activity that reviewed measurable skill gains (MSG) and National Reporting System (NRS) Table 4 to use with staff on the local level.

Building upon the FY 2017-2018 restructure of the state's data management system, the Georgia Adult Learners Information System (GALIS), a group of GOAE staff, the GALIS business analyst, report builders, and the database programmer revised the NRS Table reports and the Joint Report to comply with FY 2018-2019 reporting requirements.

Monitoring and Evaluation
GOAE conducted continuous data monitoring, site visits, and on-site program reviews to assess quality, ensure compliance with federal and state policy, and identify areas to provide technical assistance for program improvement. GOAE gave specific attention to programs with low performance, and provided targeted technical assistance to help improve program outcomes. GOAE used three methods to monitor and evaluate program improvement activities.

1. Monitoring Visits – IS team members established a monitoring schedule for all programs. Lower-performing programs received more on-site visits compared to other programs. During 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. Five programs were identified from the state's monitoring cycle schedule. Programs 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. Desk Monitoring – State staff members monitored local program data on an ongoing basis. The four Grant Program Support (GPS) Coordinators reviewed specific GALIS data for their assigned programs, including overall performance and disaggregated teacher- and student-level data. Other staff members reviewed a variety of data, including IET participation, non-IET training, assessments, attendance, and class set-up. GOAE staff reviewed and analyzed statewide performance data each week to identify trends and areas for improvement, such as programs with poor performance.

Additional Permissible Activities

National Initiatives
GOAE is actively engaged in national priorities regarding adult education, policy regulations, and reporting requirements. Staff members participated 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 policymakers. GOAE leadership and staff participated in the following events during the year:

- Building Opportunities through IELCE, 2018: GOAE continued participating in the Building Opportunities through Integrated English Language and Civics Education (IELCE) technical assistance project. Monthly calls provided insight into best practices and available resources that participating states are generating. The national coach brought a national perspective to the work and continued to be a great source of information.
- The National Training Institute (NTI), Savannah, GA, October 22-25, 2018: Two members of the GOAE Leadership team attended the National Training Institute in October 2018. The training provided an opportunity to hear updates from federal leaders and to connect with other state leaders. Key sessions at the training included "NRS Performance Reporting Review," "IET/IELCE – Beginning with the End in Mind," and "Beyond the WIOA Core: Partnering & Leveraging Resources."
- Coalition on Adult Basic Education (COABE), New Orleans, LA, April 2019: GOAE System Office staff and local program leadership and faculty attended the COABE national conference, which provided opportunities to explore evidence-based instructional strategies and national best practices. Although some local program personnel are able to attend COABE, many are not, so GOAE uses this conference as the primary source for identifying national presenters for Georgia's annual state conference.

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 education 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). Annually, CLCPs now secure over $1.6 million in donations and in-kind resources.

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.

Georgia met 90% of the overall performance benchmark in FY2018-2019. To achieve this, local programs were provided target percentages for each educational functioning level (EFL). Each time there was a state-level event, GOAE staff reviewed the ways to earn a MSG, went over components of the NRS data tables, or emphasized ways to improve performance. Key local reports that allow programs to disaggregate data at the classroom, instructor, and student level were developed or improved in order for local programs to compare their performance to the benchmarks.

Analysis of data at the mid-point of the year led to the development of three NRS-related trainings, which emphasized understanding how to report adult basic education (ABE) student performance, how to report ESL student performance, and how teachers and program staff can review their overall performance. GOAE plans to continue to develop local reports and resources that can support local programs' abilities to analyze performance in real-time and use data to drive instruction and improvement.

Adult Education Awards

GOAE honored local programs for achievements in a variety of areas as a part of the Georgia Adult Education Fall Conference. Programs were presented awards 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 2018-2019, one local program was on a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) due to noncompliance with state and federal policies related to local data management. In addition to the required Corrective Action Plan, the program was monitored more frequently and more comprehensively.

During FY 2018-2019, eleven programs were put on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) because they did not meet 90% of the federally-negotiated state MSG target for the prior fiscal year. 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. GOAE plans to continue its use of risk assessments and monitoring to identify targeted supports for programs to increase performance.

> **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.

GOAE has designated local adult education providers as the responsible parties for meeting one-stop requirements, including paying infrastructure costs. 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 adult education providers operate across multiple workforce areas, 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 or county, the longest standing comprehensive services provider (ABE, IELCE, Corrections, etc.) was taken into account.

Although GOAE felt it best to designate a primary provider that would be responsible for fulfilling the expectations outlined in the one-stop memorandum of understanding (MOU), GOAE 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 NRS-approved 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.

Each local provider also has at least one Transition Specialist whose primary function is to provide career services to Adult Education students and work collaboratively with one-stop partners. Through the annual Transitions Summit and participation in the annual WorkSource Academy, GOAE facilitates networking and partnerships between local providers and one-stop partners. The Transitions Summit brings together Transition Specialists and WIOA partners to discuss one-stop functions and career services. WorkSource Academy brings together all WIOA partners to provide workforce development strategies to improve the one-stop system.

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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 Sate 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.

GOAE held a competition in Spring 2017 for the Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) funds for FY 2018-FY2020. Ten local providers were awarded IELCE grants with services

beginning July 1, 2017. The grantees included six technical colleges, three community-based organizations, and one faith-based organization.

GOAE provided training to local providers on the requirements and expectations for implementing Integrated Education and Training (IET) into IELCE. Although 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 local workforce board meetings for their areas as well as the one-stop partner meetings. Grantees are at various stages of implementing the full requirements of IET as outlined in WIOA, and GOAE continues to provide guidance, professional development, and technical assistance.

GOAE provided IET and SSLO professional development as a part of the following trainings:
- Operations Meeting - July 24-26, 2018
- Fall Conference – September 18- 20, 2018
- Transition Specialist Fall Summit – November 15, 2018
- EAGLE – March 12, 2019
- ESL Spring Summit - May 9, 2019

Also, targeted webinars for IET and SSLO were conducted on October 31, 2018 and February 27, 2019.

As a result of focused IET training, 217 Adult Education students participated in IET during FY 2018-2019, including 16 IELCE students.

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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 standards are aligned with those K-12 standards.
Optional- Describe implementation efforts, challenges, and any lessons learned.

GOAE adopted the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) for Adult Education, which are aligned with K-12 standards. FY 2018-2019 marked the second year of the three-year rollout of the CCRS, with full statewide implementation beginning in FY 2017-2018. Program prerequisites included attending the seven-week online standards class developed and facilitated by the National Center for Families Learning. The CCRS Part One workshop provided the skills needed to review and align classroom and online materials to the standards. CCRS Part Two introduced instructors to standards-based instruction and contextualized learning. The workshops provided an overview of the Career and Employment Clusters, Career Pathways, and

Integrated Education and Training. Instructors had the opportunity to integrate workforce activities into a standards-based curriculum and design learner assessments to check for understanding. CCRS instruction was also included in the Fall 2018 Conference offerings and through other trainings and presentations.

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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.

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The Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) 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. During FY 2018-2019, adult education services were provided to 3,285 correctional students throughout the state. 1,866 of the correctional students enrolled made at least one measurable skill gain in their first Period of Participation (PoP). Overall, correctional students earned 1,890 measurable skill gains in 3,351 PoPs. According to the latest report from the Georgia Department of Corrections, based on FY 2015-2016 releases, the recidivism rate for incarcerated adults completing GED programming is 19%, compared to a recidivism rate of 28% for the general incarcerated population.

In recent years, the state has worked to develop stronger partnerships with correctional leadership to share information, such as professional development on best practices, technology challenges or lack thereof in classrooms, teacher safety in corrections, and recommended vendors for instruction. In the exchange of ideas, many teachers from the Department of Corrections and the Department of Juvenile Justice take advantage of the annual statewide Adult Education Conference and many of the teachers from the local adult education providers that serve smaller correctional sites are able to attend the Corrections Annual Conference to learn about topics more specific to correctional environments.