

## A) Required State Leadership Activities:

### Alignment:

Alignment of adult education and literacy activities with the other one-stop required partners to implement the strategies in the Unified or Combined State Plan as described in section 223(1)(a).

### **Rebranding and Overall Alignment:**

Kentucky Adult Education re-branded itself as KY Skills U (KYSU/Skills U) on July 1, 2017. Much preparation was made in fiscal year 2016-17 for the rebranding, designed to better illustrate the expanse of both education and workforce preparation opportunities provided by KYSU in all 120 counties across the Commonwealth.

KYSU continued to emphasize the importance of standards-based academic instruction contextualized with workforce preparation (essential) skills by requiring all staff in positions with instructional responsibilities to complete the Worldwide Interactive Network (WIN) soft/essential skills courseware (introduced in 2015-16) and pass the summative assessment to earn a Kentucky Essential Skills Certificate (KESC) (signed by Governor Matt Bevin) no later than the end of FY18-19 or within four weeks of date of employment. Subsequently, with an understanding of the courseware, instructors may better ensure students are enrolled in a blended, academic program of study to be awarded a KESC. Earning the KESC is one way to encourage students' continued successes with it as an initial stackable credential.

KYSU and Department for Workforce Investment (DWI) purchased the WIN courseware and summative assessment to provide opportunities for KYSU students and KCC clients to experience research-recommended blended instruction by integrating soft/essential skills courseware modules and classroom instruction. For each module, a student may earn a badge (Communication; Conveying Professionalism; Critical Thinking; and Collaboration) and, with the passage and earning of all four module badges become eligible to take the summative assessment. Additionally, the WIN courseware offers modules for standards-based academic instruction and career readiness preparation (to earn a Kentucky Career Readiness Certificate (KCRC) or National Career Readiness Certification (NCRC)).

### **Workforce and Other Partners:**

On June 27, 2019, Governor Bevin's Executive Order went into effect, moving all Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) partners under one common "umbrella" – Education and Workforce Development Cabinet (EWDC). There were other organizational realignments, ultimately resulting in the following agencies falling under the EWDC's purview: Kentucky Department of Workforce Investment (DWI); Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB); Department of Libraries and Archives (KDLA); Center for Statistics (KSTATS); Department of Education (KDOE); Commission on Proprietary Education; Educational Television (KET); Center for School Safety; Commission of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing; Governor's Scholars Program; Unemployment Insurance Commission; Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC); Governor's School of Entrepreneurs; Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR); Unemployment Insurance (UI); Office of Career Development (OCD) [formerly Employment and Training]; Employer and Apprenticeship Services; and Skills U.

In anticipation of the authorizing and implementation of the Executive Order, much preparation for integration occurred in FY18-19.

**Early Childhood - Head Start:** KYSU, Early Childhood Advisory Council, and Kentucky Community Action (KCA) have met at the state level, but have also been acquainted on the local level in an effort to create community awareness and align services. As a result, state agency and local service provider staff have become aware of viable services available to their clients. In particular, KYSU has recognized opportunities to partner with Head Start and Kentucky Community Action and deploy targeted referral processes and recruitment strategies. Examples of collaborative efforts include an invitation to present at Head Start's Board of Directors meeting and KYCA's annual conference, where local Head Start administrators and other community stakeholders were also in attendance.

Additionally, while Head Start had been paying for curricula, KYSU shared access to its Lesson Bank and Google Digital Skills curriculum with local Head Start educators. Head Start leadership plans to survey local providers about family needs and services and share this information with KYSU to streamline and focus partnership goals and objectives.

**Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives (KDLA):** KYSU has worked with KDLA in the past by encouraging local service providers to meet and share service information that can be communicated to their students/clients. In planning for FY19-20, KYSU introduced the

idea of “connection points” as a measure to improve efficient use of resources. As a result of incorporating (in the prior spring’s Request for Application’s (RFA), parameters to move local providers toward a more comprehensive regional service approach, fiscal agents applied for more counties of responsibility. Consequently, the previous year’s number of program directors declined from 63 to 27. Additionally, state policy development included examining how service could be available in all 120 counties and still accommodate for county adult education demand. Many small, rural counties do not warrant a full-service adult education center. By partnering with community organizations, adult education providers with greater in-demand services in other counties could still provide referrals, Career and College Navigator services, and access to computers and online courseware, connecting potential students to more robust center services more efficiently by establishing “connection points” with partners. Since libraries are often a prominent presence in most counties, they and other community organizations were targeted as apt partners to realize efficient use of services. By establishing connection points at the beginning of the program year, local providers are expected to evaluate and re-evaluate their appropriateness and modify for continued improvement of services. This year KYSU will monitor the strategies’ successes and challenges.

**Perkins Leadership Grant Funds:** KYSU was awarded leadership funds to reinforce its College and Career Navigator (CCN) support. As part of the spring 2018 RFA, providers must employ at least one full-time CCN (with few exceptions) and add more CCN services (hires) as enrollment dictates.

The Perkins grant afforded KYSU the opportunity to hire a state level CCN coordinator. Considering this was a new position for the service providers, KYSU desired to provide the support necessary to assist students in navigating education and career advancements. The CCN Coordinator hosted three, face-to-face training sessions for local navigators. Additionally, activity logs were created to capture CCN activities in relation to student outcomes. CCNs assist students with completing a career pathway plan that is designed for students to set educational and workforce goals based on interests, workforce needs, post-secondary education and training requirements, etc. A major responsibility of the local CCN is to be aware of and refer students to support services (e.g., public assistance, community-based services, etc.) to remove barriers to educational pursuits. The Coordinator keeps the local CCNs connected through Google docs and classrooms – forums in which the Coordinator can share important communications and local CCNs can ask questions, share best practices, etc. CCNs will also be integral as the “face” of connection points, job fairs, and other awareness-inducing events.

**Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board (KWIB):** KYSU leadership serves on two of the four KWIB committees – Workforce Participation and Sustainability and Education and Employer Engagement. The dashboard created by Kentucky Center for Statistics (KYSTATS) with the cooperation of individual agencies, is typically used to report out several metrics of interest for the KWIB, and one metric is adult education. KYSU shares KAERS data with KYSTATS to keep the dashboard up-to-date. The Board’s strategic plan will also guide the WIOA state plan.

**WorkReady Communities:** KYSU is a member of the Work Ready Communities review panel. The panel reviews proposals for certification, in-progress status, and recertification associated with WorkReady Community status. Kentucky’s counties are awarded the WorkReady Communities distinction based on meeting a set of criteria. The criteria most potentially affected by adult education include the percent of the working age population (18-64) without a high school diploma or its equivalent; the percent of working age adults with “some college” (as defined by the American Community Survey), and the number of adults who have earned essential skills and/or career readiness certificates.

**WorkReady Scholarship:** Governor Bevin initiated a Work Ready Scholarship (WRS) that is dedicated to funding tuition for up to 60 credit hours of occupational training, including 350 programs, in Kentucky’s in-demand sectors: advanced manufacturing, information technology and business, healthcare, transportation and logistics, and construction trades. It also provides an annual stipend of up to \$400 for “mandatory fees”. High-School-Equivalency- (HSE)/GED-seeking students are eligible for this scholarship. Sixteen colleges and more than 70 campuses extend GED Plus offerings (a co-enrollment program more fully described in One Stop Integration/RFA section).

While the WRS also provides \$400 per year for mandatory fees, students frequently find course required books, supplies, equipment, etc. costs prohibitive. Therefore, for the first semester of GED Plus (see One-Stop Integration below for description), KYSU committed to contributing to the costs associated with these items. Additionally, Kentucky Community and Technical College System consigned \$400 for the first 1,000 enrollees. Both partners are advocating for workforce partners to consider committing funding toward auxiliary course requirements as well as tuition. KYSU plans to offer several defined time periods in which the GED test fee will be waived. These measures will assist in removing barriers to students remaining co-enrolled and accelerate earning a HSE/GED diploma and occupational credential.

**Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS):** Kentucky continued to anticipate the implementation of Kentucky's Medicaid Waiver. The Deputy Executive Director (formerly Associate Vice President) represented KYSU on the Online Course and Learning Management System (LMS) committee. Representatives from various agencies review and approve proposed online courses for Medicaid recipients. By completing an approved course, Medicaid recipients are awarded banked "funds" that may be used for services, e.g., vision care, dental visits, etc. for themselves and family members. Although the courses are short in duration, the intent is to cultivate healthy and beneficial habits (like the aforementioned).

### **Professional Learning:**

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

**Professional Learning Model (FY18-19):** In FY18-19, KYSU piloted a new model that placed emphasis on internal, continuous, job-embedded communities of inquiry interested in monitoring relevant data and improving student outcomes. The new KYSU Professional Learning (PL) Model was implemented in October 2018. The model was first introduced to Program Directors and Assistant Program Directors in a two-day, interactive meeting. Program Directors and Assistant Program Directors were given the opportunity to provide feedback on the new model and engage in a question and answer session regarding implementation.

Then, a series of 11 rollout sessions were hosted around the state to introduce the new KYSU PL Model to instructors. During the 11 regionally-based rollout sessions, Program Directors, Assistant Program Directors, and instructors were also introduced to new instructional technology tools used to facilitate professional learning. Google Classrooms and Zoom Videoconferencing were adopted as part of the new model, and all providers were given an opportunity to practice using the technology at each of the live rollout events.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are the centerpiece of the new KYSU PL Model. PLCs emphasize student focus, provider voice, and local innovation. In the FY18-19 pilot phase, KYSU PLCs learned from each other, practiced what they have learned in their classrooms, and shared outcomes with each other. The ultimate goal is that PLCs will have long-term impact on cooperative problem-solving affecting local program performance.

Each of the 27 KYSU provider-based PLCs was assigned a PLC Coach tasked with facilitating PLC meetings targeted towards creating a product to remedy a data-based provider challenge. PLC Coaches also worked with providers to ensure an array of new student-centric instructional resources were being used to support improved student outcomes. These resources include a new Kentucky Skills U Instructional Framework Series designed to improve the quality and efficiency of Mathematics and Reasoning through Language Arts (RLA) instruction; a new Student Persistence/Retention Framework containing strategies targeted to adult learners; a new website warehousing the PLC-developed culminating products; and an enhancement of the existing Kentucky Skills U Lesson Bank.

KYSU Professional Learning Requirements were also recalibrated as part of the overall KYSU PL Model re-design. Learning requirements for Program Directors, Assistant Program Directors, and Experienced instructors working 500+ hours per year were revised to allow for vertical integration and collaboration among veteran KYSU instructional staff.

Provider perceptions of the pilot were monitored between October 2018 and June 2019 via anonymous electronic surveys, face-to-face interactions, and focus groups. By the end of the fiscal year, programs reported positive experiences with the overall intent of the new model, PLCs, PLC Coaches, and PLC processes.

### **Provision of Technical Assistance:**

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

KYSU has four state-level employees (one program director, two regional coordinators, and one Kentucky Adult Education Reporting System [KAERS] administrator) who provide technical assistance to KYSU-funded adult education providers in Kentucky. Each of the regional coordinators serves the technical assistance and policy and procedural interpretational needs of local providers in a different region of the state. The KAERS administrator works with all providers to provide technical assistance related to Skills U's student information system called the Kentucky Adult Education Reporting System (KAERS).

At the beginning of the fiscal year, the regional coordinators and the KAERS administrator conducted technical assistance trainings (July 26, 2018 – August 7, 2018) related to KAERS and the state adult education implementation guidelines at seven sites (Madisonville, Somerset, Bowling Green, Lexington, Morehead, Elizabethtown, and Louisville) across the state. These technical assistance trainings were offered to all individuals employed through the AEFLA grant and Kentucky's adult education funding. Each session focused on the state's *Implementation Guidelines* and the newest KAERS functionalities. Additionally, the KAERS section focused on technical aspects, which included, but was not limited to: data quality and flow, defining data elements (with an emphasis on the barriers to employment), data collection, and data analysis. The training also included the use of the reporting tool in KAERS and how best to interpret and utilize reports for program improvement. Review of the KYSU *Implementation Guidelines* highlighted important policy-related matters, placing particular emphasis on the assessment policy and appropriate testing protocol, as set forth by test publisher guidelines. For example, KYSU and our WIOA core partners require any person administering a TABE test to be certified through the DRC/McGraw-Hill TABE testing certification process to ensure proper and consistent testing protocol.

During the 2018 program year, the KYSU administration and accountability team had three half-day (October 9, January 16, and February 27) and three, one-full-day (November 28, January 17, and February 28) face-to-face technical assistance trainings, including some professional development, for all KYSU directors. At these technical assistance trainings, a wide variety of items were discussed. As a highlight, the first training included information regarding the GED®+Plus co-enrollment initiative and a review of end-of-year performance data. The second (Jan. 17) and third (Feb. 28) trainings were delivered in conjunction with Probation and Parole and SNAP E&T, respectively.

The Administration and Accountability team, in conjunction with the Professional Learning team, conducted a two-day (August 23-34) technical assistance training for local program directors to introduce the concept of Professional Learning Communities.

In order to provide a smooth transition from FY19 to FY 20, the Administration and Accountability team began three-hour, face-to-face meetings with local program directors, two at a time, to receive details on changes to the *Implementation Guidelines*, College and Career Navigation, Strategic Partnership initiatives, and Finance. Due to scheduling, these meetings concluded at the very beginning of FY 20.

Regional coordinators also conducted bi-monthly phone calls with all local program directors to review performance data and strategies for improving outcomes. Directors were asked to rate strategies for effectiveness. These calls afforded the directors the opportunity to address successes and challenges concerning their Outreach and Recruitment plans.

Throughout the year, new information relative to performance, WIOA, etc., was disseminated through mass e-mails and other forms of online communication. Regional coordinators also responded to program inquiries via telephone and e-mail and made single program visits as requested.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation:**

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

Throughout the year, funded local providers' performance outcomes were evaluated by state staff on a weekly basis. A statewide report was shared every Monday with Skills U staff along with a county-level report among the administration and accountability team. These outcomes served as an indicator of quality services and an assessment tool for program improvement. Each week, regional coordinators generated up-to-date performance results and, based on performance and progress, provided technical assistance as necessary.

A real time component of KAERS' (i.e., updated every night) dashboard shows each local provider, at a county-level, the annual goal, weekly goal, and actual outcome for measures. Specifically, the dashboard displays three measures for total Measurable Skills Gain [formerly "academic

performance”] and total High School Equivalency Diplomas earned. Additionally, Measurable Skills Gain Performance and total Participants are shared. The dashboard also displays a measure called “HSE Performance”, which is the same as Secondary Credential Attainment but includes participants who enter at NRS ABE level 4, regardless if they progress into NRS ABE level 5 or 6.

Local provider performance was a topic of discussion at state meetings and in ongoing conversations between the regional coordinators and the local Skills U program directors. Regional coordinators conducted bi-monthly phone calls with all local program directors to review performance data and strategies for improving outcomes. Local providers were asked to rate strategies for effectiveness. These calls also afforded the directors the opportunity to address successes and challenges around their Outreach and Recruitment plans. In addition to the bi-monthly phone calls, regional coordinators conducted quarterly desktop audits with local providers to assess record keeping, data quality, and adherence to policies, etc. Local providers who did not achieve at least 70% of the performance goals received KYSU technical assistance visits with the Program Director, Fiscal Agent, and pertinent staff to suggest strategic improvements in preparation for the upcoming program year. Additionally, the local provider was required to complete a Program Improvement Plan (PIP). The plan included specific action through which the program would make the necessary changes to document progress, available upon request by KYSU. Local providers with performance less than 50% of all performance goals were placed on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) to include monthly meetings with KYSU staff. In addition, independent audits were conducted by the Kentucky Auditor of Public Accounts at programs in 30 Kentucky counties (25% of the state). Both programmatic and financial records were reviewed, along with policy compliance. Findings and/or recommendations were subsequently followed-up by appropriate regional coordinators to rectify any anomalies or non-compliance matters.

At fiscal-year end, local program performance data was e-mailed and mailed to local providers’ fiscal agent heads and Skills U Directors. The end-of-the-year letter was accompanied with a local provider score card. The score card provided descriptive data related to the program and students as well as end-of-year performance data, specifically, metrics used in the state performance funding formula, which is primarily comprised of the three means of making a measurable skills gain (i.e., percentage of students earning a GED® diploma, pre-test/post-test level gains, and adult education students transitioning to postsecondary education and training). The score card is available to program staff through the KAERS system year-round, and some program staff share their score cards with local partners.

## **B) Permissible State Leadership Activities:**

As applicable, describe how the State has used funds for additional permissible activities in section 223(a)(2). The development and implementation of technology applications, translation technology, or distance education, including professional development to support the use of instructional technology.

### **Professional Learning: Instructional Technology Assistance:**

Building upon the insights from the 2017-18 commissioned report on the state of KYSU instructional technology integration, KYSU intensified efforts to ensure full integration of technology in the classroom, as measured by students’ – not instructors’ – use of technology in the classroom and remotely.

Google Classroom and Zoom Videoconferencing were adopted as essential instructional tools in the new KYSU PL Model. These tools were adopted because they provided no-cost, easy-access options for professional learning and instruction. The goal was to utilize preferred instructional technology tools in all professional learning initiatives so that instructors would gain familiarity with the technology and continue use with students. For example, all 27 provider-based PLCs utilized 27 unique Google Classrooms to facilitate PLC interaction. The experience instructors gained by using Google Classroom for professional learning was immediately transferrable to their daily instructional roles. Similarly, Zoom Videoconferencing was used to facilitate full PLC participation in multi-county provider groups. Zoom use eliminated the budget-impacting impediments of travel expense and compensated travel time previously associated with professional learning events. Consequently, provider adoption of Zoom-based student interactions has provided a technology-facilitated means of overcoming the perennial adult education student persistence barrier associated with transportation.

In FY 18-19 KYSU created a new Instructional Technology Framework. This interactive framework is intended to be a living document that is open to feedback from instructors. The examples of instructional technology described in the framework are meant to be supplements to quality instruction,

not replacements for it. The framework supports the KYSU philosophy that sound instruction is designed around clear learning objectives. Integration of the technology tools highlighted in the new framework allow for greater contextualization and digital literacy needed for college and career success.

Professional learning was delivered in face-to-face, online, or blended formats by PD contractors from the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development (CCLD) at the University of Kentucky, the Adult Education Academy at Morehead State University, the National Center for Families Learning (NCFL), and Kentucky Educational Television (KET). (See also Professional Learning above.)

## **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.**

This was the third year in which MSG was based on one overall percentage rather than negotiating each ABE/ASE and ESL NRS level; a change that occurred with the start of WIOA performance reporting. The single MSG performance measure incorporated three means by which a participant may make a measurable skill gain (i.e., a pre-test/post-test or exit adult education and enter postsecondary education or training level gain, or by earning a high school equivalency diploma). This was the second year that the additional WIOA Common Performance Measures were reported; either for the full program year cohort (i.e., Employment in the Second Quarter after Exit and Median Earnings Second Quarter after Exit) or half of the program year cohort (i.e., Employment Fourth Quarter after Exit and Credential Attainment). The most recent measures provide a baseline by which to compare future WIOA Common Performance Measures, while Measurable Skills Gain performance can be compared to the prior year.

Measurable Skills Gain performance declined from 54.89% to 51.10%, a difference of 3.79 percentage points (ppts). KYSU's MSG decline was greatest in ABE Level 1 (7 ppts) and ESL level 2 (8 ppts). While these were our greatest levels of decline, they are two of our three smallest cohorts of students. Our largest cohorts of students (i.e., ABE Levels 3 and 4) increased 2 ppts and 3 ppts respectively. Our greatest increases were in ABE level 6 (3 ppts), ESL level 3 (3 ppts), and ESL level 4 (4 ppts). In terms of performance, the state did not meet its negotiated target for Measurable Skills Gain (56%); the state slightly declined in its overall performance (54.89%) compared to the previous year (55.17%). The general trends for local providers and Measurable Skills Gain performance appear to be: 1) more success with students who were in the higher ABE levels (with the exception of level 6) and 2) less success with students who were in the lower ESL levels. However, assessing this performance is difficult with the state transition from TABE 9 & 10 to TABE 11 & 12. In this program year, KYSU served students transitioning to post-secondary education and students assessed for employment purposes. Those assessed for work, who should have initially tested on TABE 9 & 10, may have tested using TABE 11 & 12 and then post-tested using TABE 9 & 10, consequently this would not show MSG gains/losses. TABE 9 & 10 is no longer an option for pre- and post-testing.

All local providers who met the minimum measurable skill gain and HSE graduates threshold were eligible to be recognized as a top 25 county. The top 25 counties are calculated by ranking all local providers based on the following performance metrics: HSE Graduates, HSE Performance, and Academic Performance. Then, each county is assigned a point value based on their ranking in each performance metric (e.g., top performer will earn one point, second top performer will earn two points). This is calculated for each metric, and then total points are calculated. Last, the counties are ranked based on the fewest total points. The county with the fewest total points is the top performer. Skills U state staff implemented two new protocols to ensure higher levels of performance.

First, all local providers have been asked to complete an "Outreach and Recruiting Strategic Plan". This plan details all outreach and recruiting efforts noting responsible staff, necessary resources, etc., and tracks the actual participants garnered from the effort. These plans are submitted to the state staff office for evaluation to ensure that the duration and intensity of the efforts results in a number of participants to meet goals.

Second, each local Skills U Director will participate in a bi-monthly phone call with their regional coordinator. Prior to the phone call, the Skills U Director completes a worksheet (based on their KAERS data and reports) on which they list their current performance for a number of measures. Additionally, they list specific strategies related to these measures. For each strategy, the director self-assesses the outcome. Based on these self-assessments, the Skills U Director is asked to consider adding more strategies on how s/he could improve upon the current strategies, if the strategies are not producing the desired outcomes that would lead to meeting performance goals.

Regarding the most recently submitted measures, 51.63% of all exiters were employed in the Second Quarter after Exit, 52.04% were employed in the Fourth Quarter after Exit (half of the program year cohort), and the Median Earnings of the exiters Employed in the Second Quarter after exit was \$6,008. Of the participants who earned a secondary school equivalency diploma, 21.57% were enrolled in postsecondary education or training within one year after exit and 20.07% were employed within one year after exit.

## **One-Stop Integration/RFA:**

**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.**

KYSU negotiated Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with the ten local Workforce Innovation Boards. While some adult education providers are co-located physically, all have come to agreements as to services available on site and referral processes using direct linkages. KYSU has contributed to infrastructure costs statewide by purchasing online TABE test (which local program staff typically administer) and access to Worldwide Integrated Network (WIN) jointly purchased (DWI and KYSU as described in prior annual report narrative) courseware and cumulative assessment. State staff and local WIBs cost out services available to shared infrastructure costs, e.g., provider services (see below), TABE tests, Strategic Partnership Coordinators' time and College and Career Navigator time and service, etc.

KYSU agreed to secure enough online TABE tests to provide access to partners, including use in the Kentucky Career Centers (KCCs). The purchase proved more cost effective for partners having to purchase small amounts and contributes to a more consistent and informed referral system (students may TABE test and be appropriately referred to KYSU, reducing occasions of over testing) and greater access to testing for employers.

KYSU local providers also provide and report career services at comprehensive and affiliate KCCs, including outreach, intake, orientation, initial assessments, referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services, provision of performance and program cost information on eligible providers, information on availability of supportive services or assistance, and integrated education and training programs.

During the RFA process, one key program position was introduced and each service area was required to employ, as staff at the local KYSU provider, at least one College and Career Navigator (CCN). KYSU was awarded leadership funds to reinforce its CCN support.

The CCN role was described as providing transition services that include a continuum of personal and instructional strategies and collaborative support to enhance the awareness of and access to a network of community resources supporting individual career and educational goals. Intended to perpetuate retention and transitions, CCN roles and responsibilities include: referrals to community resources, building rapport with students, exploring careers and required skill sets, setting milestones leading to accomplishable goals, etc.

The other position introduced as a concerted attempt to ensure KCC and KYSU program integration is the Strategic Partnership Coordinator (SPCs), who reports to the Director of Strategic Partnerships at the KYSU state office. Four of the five coordinators were hired at the end of program year 17-18 and the first quarter of FY19-20. There were delays due to hiring freezes related to the transition from Council on Postsecondary Education to Education and Workforce Development Cabinet. The SPC facilitate outreach, referral systems, and innovative connectivity within the service areas. While employed at the state level, geographically dispersed coordinators, located in four (4) regional workforce innovation areas (soon to be 5 with the hire in the Louisville workforce area), act as conduits between workforce and other partners to identify external opportunities for program directors to engage as ways to achieve alignment, integration, and seamless services to students and clients

KYSU collaborated with the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) to create a new program called "GED<sup>®</sup>+Plus". The GED<sup>®</sup>+Plus program creates an accelerated option for providing education and training for adult learners through an integrated pathway model that allows students to learn academic and occupational skills at the same time. The GED<sup>®</sup>+Plus program targets working age adults who do not have a high school diploma or its equivalent. The program co-enrolls participants seeking a high school equivalency (HSE)/GED diploma in a KYSU program and in one of the state's top five industry sectors, allowing participants to earn both a HSE/GED diploma and a short-term (i.e., one 16-week semester or less) certificate. GED<sup>®</sup>+Plus participants qualify for scholarships through the WRS initiative to pay for their tuition in college classes. Skills U has 27 local providers who collaborate with the 16 KCTCS colleges to offer programs designed to meet labor market needs and increase credential attainment for adults. KYSU leadership meets quarterly with KCTCS to discuss marketing strategies, enrollment trends and student success outcomes for GED<sup>®</sup>+Plus participants.

## **Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) Program:**

**Describe: When state competition was held and number of grants awarded; efforts in meeting the requirement to provide integrated education and training; how progressing toward: goal of placing in unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries (performance results, challenges, lesson learned) and goal of ensuring program activities are integrated with local workforce development system and its functions (performance results, challenges, lessons learned).**

As a result of the Request for Application released in spring 2018, three counties applied for and were awarded Section 243 funding. In FY18-19, KYSU served 497 IELCE English language learners (ELLs) and attained 279 measurable skills gains in the following three Kentucky counties: Fayette, Jefferson, and Warren.

For eligible IELCE applicants of the RFA, the service area for which they were applying for core services funds must have met a minimum of 2,000 ELLs. Applicants were required to submit separate forms describing the program's plan of service and indicate how resources would be allocated in the budget and budget narrative. The eligible applicants were required to provide: the three (3) most recent fiscal years' data indicating the ELL total population, number of ELLs enrolled the previous three (3) years, and projected number of ELL enrollments.

KYSU reinforced communication of IELCE requirements in the RFA. Eligible applicants were asked to describe the student experience, including recruitment, intake and orientation; program design, classes, curriculum, and use of technology; roles and responsibilities of staff and partner service providers; education services, including literacy and ELA and integrated instruction on rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civics participation; student transition from ELA to ABE and integrated education and training opportunities and employment outcomes;

standards-based instruction, including workforce preparation, earning a KESC, sector occupational contextualizing, co-enrollment workforce training and placement opportunities; in-demand sector pathway, why it was selected, and who would provide workforce training; recognized credential associated with occupational training or student's educational and/or career advancement; employer investment; and the process for workforce partners to place students into unsubsidized employment.

Although intensive program director informational and technical assistance sessions were hosted by KYSU, full integration of IELCE program components and provider performance expectations were not realized. Therefore, further TA and program monitoring is planned for the three programs in FY19-20.

KYSU's purchase of Burlington English appeared to contribute to IELCE participants' blended instructional experience, civics education, and career exploration. The courseware is CASAS aligned and provides academic instruction for ELL students. Of particular interest is its inclusion of soft skills, career exploration courses, and comprehensive technical/professional learning support services.

**Modification Requested:**

**Please address these three bullets from the instructions (attached). Specifically, where there are no reportable achievements, please provide information on challenges to implementation of applicants' plans, lessons learned, and about any TA and monitoring you did. Describe your State efforts in meeting the requirement to provide IELCE services in combination with integrated education and training activities;**

*As a result of Kentucky Skills U's (KYSU/Skills U) spring 2018 Request for Application's (RFA) emphasis on regional service areas, there are 27 local fiscal agents across the state. Three of these fiscal agents applied for and were awarded Section 243 Integrated Education Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) grant funding. Skills U recognized that with the reauthorization of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the IELCE program was a significant departure from prior English Literacy and Civics grant's programming. Therefore, the Program Administration and Accountability (PPA) team, using Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) resources, conducted technical assistance sessions specifically targeting IELCE program and Integrated Education and Training (IET) models, which included step-by-step law, regulation, and policy reviews, as well as participant interaction using scenarios and discussion to facilitate providers' understanding and recognition of programming components.*

*During 2019-20, the PPA team conducted a thorough evaluation of the three local Skills U IELCE programs. Consequently, it became apparent there was not a common understanding of how best to implement the IELCE program.*

*One provider's fiscal agent had instituted an organization-wide restructuring, including hiring a new program director. With this restructuring, institutional knowledge of IELCE program implementation was lost. However, the new program director is eager to serve students in innovative ways, has gratefully accepted TA, and acknowledges it will take time to mobilize improvements in the program. A second provider did not have a clear understanding of IELCE's integration and assimilation goals. The third provider's IELCE program served as an example of appropriate integration and implementation of English Language Acquisition, workforce preparation, civics and citizenship preparation, and access to occupational sector co-enrollment opportunities. Additionally, the provider recognizes the importance of retaining English Language Learners (ELLs) to transition them to Adult Basic/Secondary Education and facilitate the goals of attaining a high school equivalency and technical credential through KY's GED®+Plus program.*

*Therefore, the PAA team held an IELCE workshop with these three providers. Common agenda items for the workshop included:*

*Program updates (i.e., contact hour reports, level gains, GED attainment, transition to postsecondary/employment, etc.); Budget review; Program design (i.e., program offerings, partnerships, staffing, barriers to implementation, etc.); Effective implementation of workforce preparation and sector occupational contextualizing and co-enrollment in workforce training, and Recruitment and retention strategies.*

*After the workshop, the PAA team scheduled individual technical assistance trainings with each of the IELCE providers to address barriers to implementation, assist with program design and staffing needs, and provide other recommendations for improvement. The team used the following resources to guide the programmatic review: "Building Opportunities through Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education: IELCE Self-Assessment Too," "Quick-Reference Guide to Using LINCS;" and Program Memorandums OCTAE/DAEL 15-7, 17-2 and 19-2.*

*Following the individual technical assistance sessions, each of the three local providers were required to submit a one-page proposal outlining their revised program design, program goals, curriculum and course syllabus, staffing allocations, partnerships to support workforce preparation and training needs, and any changes to their budget. Obviously, two providers had improvements that are more significant in their proposals than the third.*

*The PAA team conducts bi-monthly check-ins (January, March and May) to ensure strategies are being implemented and producing the desired outcomes. At fiscal year-end (2019-20), each IELCE provider will be required to submit a one-page narrative and evaluation logic model to show evidence of demonstrated effectiveness. The evaluation logic model will serve as a monitoring tool for the PAA team to assess performance outcomes, ensure compliance, address barriers to implementation, provide technical assistance, and identify key strategies and best practices to support IELCE programming.*

***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;**

IELCE program students have access to GED®+Plus, which is a co-enrollment integrated education and training program offered in partnership between Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) and described below.

KYSU collaborated with KCTCS to create a new program called “GED®+Plus”. The GED®+Plus program creates an accelerated option for providing education and training for adult learners through an integrated pathway model that allows students to learn academic and occupational skills at the same time. The GED®+Plus program targets working age adults who do not have a high school diploma or its equivalent.

The program co-enrolls participants seeking a high school equivalency (HSE)/GED® diploma in a KYSU program and in one of the state’s top five industry sectors, allowing participants to earn both a HSE/GED® diploma and a short-term (i.e., one 16-week semester or less) certificate. GED®+Plus participants qualify for scholarships through the Work Ready Kentucky Scholarship (WRKS) initiative to pay for their tuition in college classes.

Skills U has 27 local providers who collaborate with the 16 KCTCS colleges to offer programs designed to meet labor market needs and increase credential attainment for adults. KYSU leadership meets quarterly with KCTCS to discuss marketing strategies, enrollment trends, and student success outcomes for GED®+Plus participants.

The Commonwealth initiated a WRKS that is dedicated to funding tuition for up to 60 credit hours of occupational training, including 350 programs, in Kentucky’s in-demand sectors: advanced manufacturing, informational technology and business, healthcare, transportation and logistics, and construction trades. It also provides an annual stipend of up to \$400 for “mandatory fees”. HSE/GED®-seeking students are eligible for this scholarship. Sixteen colleges and more than 70 campuses may extend GED®+Plus offerings.

In addition to GED®+Plus, KYSU continues to explore ways in which to partner with alternative organizations from the community and technical colleges (e.g., YouthBuild’s construction training) to offer core adult education services concurrently with occupational skills training. While these services may not include all the wraparound support services as a fully articulated career pathway program, defined in WIOA Section 3 (Def. 7), they provide an opportunity for adult education providers to collaborate with training organizations to accelerate student learning by attaining adult education contextualized academic support and aligned occupational skills training simultaneously.

Additionally, the KYSU strategic partnerships unit has already forged relationships with local workforce innovation boards (LWIB) and Kentucky Career Centers to offer students opportunities to engage in work-based learning activities leading to potential job placements with community employers. (Response for below as well.)

KYSU wants to grow and expand the concept of IET in Kentucky beyond GED®+Plus to include prospective collaborations with employers, pre-apprenticeship programs, public and private four-year universities, etc., to support the occupational training element of an IET model by offering a variety of ways students can accelerate their educational and career accomplishments.

**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.**

As part of the changes implemented as a result of WIOA reauthorization, KYSU established a new position, Strategic Partnership Coordinator (SPC). Five SPCs are located regionally (corresponding to Local Workforce Investment Boards [LWIBs] regions) and report to a director at the state level. Their charge is two-fold, connect and coordinate services and activities through Kentucky Career Centers (KCCs) and identify new and innovative opportunities to serve more students by liaising with and expanding local community partnerships.

While SPCs strategically recognize potential partnerships, they serve the providers, who ultimately decide if and how services may become available based on existing resources. The SPCs have already had successes collaborating with recovery centers (many recently established or extended due to the opioid crisis), where cohorts of individuals without a high school credential reside and the potential to provide adult education services exists. Services are frequently available on-site due to the restrictions placed on residents.

KYSU continually provides opportunities to connect local providers with local partners to enhance student access, support, and success. Each fiscal year, KYSU hosts collaborative trainings and workshops between local libraries, our LWIBs, and KCCs to encourage them to identify and implement innovative strategies to serve adult learners, support area certification processes and identify ways to improve the health of their communities’ workforce. Because of KYSU’s collaborative efforts with workforce, local and statewide partners, we are able to better integrate and streamline student support services.

Based on our Enrollment Source Report in KAERS, we receive roughly 321-386 referrals from employer, community agencies, and WIOA core partners per year (i.e, FY18 – 321, FY19 – 386, FY20 – 327). With the use of available resources, technical assistance, bi-monthly monitoring, and offering additional trainings and workshops with our local partners, our IELCE providers will continue to help our state with identifying how to best align adult education activities with postsecondary, workforce, and local partner needs.

## **Adult Education Standards:**

KYSU Instructional Framework Series was designed in FY 18-19 to provide a common instructional foundation for all of Kentucky’s adult education providers. Local adult educators (who aligned

instruction with College and Career Readiness Standards [CCRS], student assessment criteria, and program performance metrics) provided the impetus for this project. Building upon local providers' input, a state-level team designed the series to align all instruction statewide with the LINCS Professional Development Center Self-Assessment Tool, the LINCS Adult Education Teacher Competencies, the Data Recognition Corporation TABE 11/12 Blueprints (based on the College and Career Readiness Standards), and the GED® High Impact Indicators.

The context of the Mathematics and Reasoning through Language Arts (RLA) Frameworks was constructed to provide uniformity and ease of use. A CCRS Key was placed in the framework introductions to assist users in understanding standards abbreviations; color-coding was used to signify the type and percentage of Standards-based content at each Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) Level; and a horizontal crosswalk was used to illustrate specific CCRS applications aligned with specific hyperlinked instructional resources.

The English Language Proficiency (ELP) Instructional Framework was developed in FY 18-19 to continue the same uniformity and ease of use associated with the Mathematics and RLA Frameworks. The resources in the ELP Standards (ELPS) Instructional Framework were organized in two ways. First, each ELP Standard was listed with level descriptors, aligned competencies, and resources. Second, resources were listed by proficiency level. The ELPS Framework was based on the five proficiency levels identified in the LINCS ELPS for Adult Education. As with the previous frameworks, the ELPS Framework was designed to ensure conformity in standards-based instruction.

### **Programs for Correction:**

**Department of Corrections (DOC):** The Department of Corrections employs and directs adult education within its state institutions. However, with agreement from the local jailer (an elected official), all local KYSU providers are required to afford adult education to inmates. During this past program year, Kentucky has focused on corrections reforms, including ex-offender transition and re-entry services.

KYSU recognized the potential for reaching more individuals without a high school diploma or its equivalent by initiating new strategies to partner with DOC. KYSU and DOC hosted an event where local program directors were introduced to regional probation counselors and arranged for time to develop a referral processes for re-entering ex-offenders and ex-offenders who regularly meets with counselors/officers. A steering committee, assembled by KYSU and DOC state staff, meet regularly to examine the data (e.g., referrals, retention beyond 12 hours, high school equivalency attainment) to continue to improve processes for greater student recruitment, retention, and results outcomes.

**Kentucky Young Adults Diversion Partnership:** In February 2018, the U.S. Department of Education's, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) selected Kentucky to participate in a technical assistance initiative to strengthen diversion services for justice-involved youth. The goal included fortifying programs through career, technical, and special education and workforce development. Throughout the initiative, KYSU invited local, regional, and state organizations to participate in the development of the Kentucky Young Adults Diversion Partnership.

The partnership's members view this initiative as a means for the state's corrections, education, and supportive services organizations to establish and maintain a broad network of services to support young adults at risk or currently involved in the court system. KYSU led the partnership in developing relationships and fostering progress on a mission statement, goals, and objectives for the network. The initiative has facilitated and advanced into other projects involving youth and young adult advocacy, such as the state Social Impact Partnerships to Pay for Result Acts (SIPPRA) planning grants.