

Maine Year End Narrative PY 2018-2019

1. State Leadership Funds

(a) How the State has used funds available under section 223 for each of the following:

- Alignment with other one-stop required partners to implement strategies of Unified Plan 223(1)(a).

Due to the withholding by the state of Title 1 funds to local workforce boards during PY18, efforts to align literacy and education activities and offer cross-agency training and programming were stalled. Contributing to this inaction was the layoff and/or dismissal of one-stop staff, one-stop partner meetings were not held, and local boards were barely operable. With an emphasis in the state plan on preparing adults with employability skills, in the spring, core partners were invited and attended *Seamless: Soft Skills in the Classroom and Beyond* and several core partners participated in the *Career and Education Advising* course in the spring. Time was spent throughout the year with core partners in the development of a portal for referrals and case management approach of common clients. Meetings began in December with members of the community college system regarding pathways in some of the trades and the place of adult education in supporting adult learners. Local programs also used money they allotted to leadership to work with developing stronger relations with core partners to develop employment pathways.

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

The State Office provides quality professional development with an approach that recognizes the geographical and logistical challenges local service providers face in largely rural Maine and the primarily part-time instructional staff across the state. This approach includes delivery of professional development through in-person and distance learning contexts as well as synchronous and asynchronous modalities.

In-Person: Large-scale, state-wide topics, such as content-focused instructional practices or required state trainings are held in centrally-located sites. This included LINCS *Adult Numeracy Instruction* and TERC's *Adults Reaching Algebra Readiness* mathematics trainings, the *World of Work Inventory* case studies training, and *Seamless*, a workshop on building soft skills into academic instruction. Regional trainings were held at three locations across the state to support local providers with the transition to the CASAS GOALS assessment. The state-required CASAS Basic implementation training was offered at the same sites which allowed over 100 local staff to participate. The State Office is exploring integrating regional "road shows" for the assessment and data required trainings to allow for more in-person trainings. This live, large cohort approach is also implemented twice yearly for local service provider administrators and

new program administrators to address high-impact topics around WIOA and program development.

Distance: Professional development that focuses on improving instructional or advising practices and refreshers for the field occurred through facilitated or self-paced courses on Schoology (learning management system) and/or through video conferencing platforms (Zoom or Adobe). Online courses may include a video conference as a kick-off, a discussion of specific course content with follow-up online course elements that include opportunities to try new practices, or a culmination and sharing of the course activities and assignments. Professional development delivered by these methods included new teacher orientation, CCRS-SIA implementation trainings, Reading Apprenticeship, and courses in career and education advising, learner accessibility, and Universal Design for Learning.

Support mechanism: The *Group* feature in Schoology allows participants an opportunity to continue the conversation and sharing outside of the course and to access resources and share among the group. Professional development needs and focus are identified through an assessment of local provider yearend reports, responses to competitive grant applications, feedback on professional development offerings, and an inventory of initiatives at the state level. Using this information, the State Office compiles a projected professional development calendar which is shared with the field. Local providers can offer feedback on the scheduling and any additional topics that would support their professional development needs.

Resources such as professional development events, articles, and examples and models of promising practices, are disseminated to the field through a statewide listserv (a distribution list to local service providers) and saved in topic-specific Schoology groups. The professional development portal lists all State Office-sponsored or facilitated opportunities, tracks event registration, accommodations, and completions, and allows users to manage their transcripts for state certification. The State Professional Development Coordinator maintains an archive of recorded events and shares the links with the field, as well as archiving them in the appropriate Schoology group. External professional development opportunities, articles, and resources are also shared in topic-specific Schoology groups, such as adult numeracy, writing for the adult learner, data/MaineSTARS, and assessment. In PY18, the State Data Coordinator reorganized and increased the number of on-demand resources in the data/MaineSTARS group by adding tutorials and resources to support practitioners in best practices for data collection and analysis and in using the state data management system.

State Office personnel attend relevant and appropriate federal and regional technical assistance trainings, such as NRS on-line and in-person trainings, OCTAE Shop Talks, CASAS National Summer Institute, OCTAE annual state directors meeting, LINCS professional learning groups, the NASDAE National Training Institute, and the IDEAL consortium summer institute. The State personnel then, depending on the content of the meetings, replicates the training for the local providers, provides information, materials, and/or develops guidance.

Local providers and their regional hubs also offered professional development that is more program or region-specific. The Maine Adult Education Association (MAEA) hosts professional development that supports local providers' enrichment programming and engages with the State Office regarding appropriate topics for their annual conference.

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

(i) The State Office provided technical in the following 2018-2019 events:

- **Reading, writing, speaking:** CCRS-SIA ELA/Literacy Implementation, Reading Apprenticeship, Part 1 & 2, Seamless: Soft Skills in the Classroom and Beyond (in-person and online)
- **Mathematics:** Adult Numeracy Instruction (ANI), Adults Reaching Algebra Readiness (AR)², Charting the Way to Mathematics Success, CCRS-SIA Mathematics Implementation
- **English Language Acquisition:** Introduction to the English Language Proficiency Standards, English Language Proficiency Standards Instructional Leadership Workgroup
- **Distance Education:** Distance Learning 101 & 102
- **Staff Training:** Navigating the Waters of Adult Education, World of Work Inventory, Level 3 Case Studies; World of Work Inventory Level 1 & 2 Training Learner Accessibility, Universal Design for Learning, Career and Education Advising, WorkReady Facilitator Training, eCASAS Basic Implementation Training, CASAS Linking to Instruction, Transition to CASAS GOALS Training, HiSET Reboot Training; HiSET Examiner training, MaineSTARS data training (collecting, analyzing, reporting); fiscal management (best practices); new program administrator training series

(ii) Local programs received information on their role and responsibilities as part of the workforce development system. Each Local Board welcomed an adult education representative. Each local board also revitalized their one-stop partners groups and adult educators participated in the meetings and planning sessions.

Training was provided in collaboration with Maine DOL on the development of a common intake form, properly meeting expectations of recording participants in courses listed on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). With assistance from the State Office, several local programs developed better relationships with their neighboring community college campuses that led to classes on campuses and meetings between community college and adult education admissions and advising staff.

(iii) The State Office uses Schoology, a learning management system, to provide both a model for local providers of online learning and as a repository for educational and programmatic materials and resources. State Office personnel encourage providers to develop and offer online or blended opportunities for their learners using Schoology, and offer support in course

development, effective online instruction, and how to navigate the system. As a result of these efforts by the State Office, Schoology courses offered by local service providers included courses in workforce preparation, writing, academic success, career exploration, and mathematics. Consortia of local providers also used the Schoology *group* feature to create online professional learning communities where instructors and advisors across the consortia shared resources and best practices.

In PY18, the State Office revised its Phase 1 and Phase 2 CCRS trainings in ELA/Literacy. Based on provider feedback, the trainings were changed from 8-week online courses to shorter, self-paced and facilitated trainings, allowing instructional staff to complete the trainings in one semester. The mathematics revision was undertaken to unroll in PY19. Phase 3 of the implementation, *CCRS-SIA Observation Toolkit*, was developed as a blended model which includes online work on Schoology and a Zoom meeting where participants learn about the tool and practice as a group.

An IET technical assistance group was established on Schoology to assist local providers with IET development. After viewing a recorded webinar, local providers worked through a series of activities to develop their IET plan. Once the plan was submitted, the State Office provided specific feedback to ensure that the IET met federal definitions.

To support the consortium (hub) model of service delivery, the State Office provided extensive trainings on how to develop a collaborative model of program delivery, including such topics as identifying gaps and assets, sharing resources, data collection, reporting and budgeting.

The State Office maintains membership in the IDEAL Consortium which offers support and professional development in distance education. We continue to review and revise the policy and guidance as we work with programs in implementing their plans and encourage more local providers to implement distance and blended learning.

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

The State Office: maintains a consistent monitoring and evaluation system of the AEFLA programs. This includes post-event satisfaction and usefulness surveys; analysis of local AEFLA reporting, and longitudinal data analysis; training for local providers in meeting the outcome and performance measures of WIOA at bi-annual meetings, in webinars, and at regional hub meetings; as well as providing AEFLA providers with research-based, promising practices trainings and technical assistance in instructional practice, the use of technology, data collection, and analysis; and supports new program administrators with ongoing training including, WIOA-requirements, AEFLA funding and allowable expenses, and program development.

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

The State Office contracts with outside agencies and individuals to conduct state leadership activities. These contracts, funded through the leadership activities portion of the AEFLA grant, provide a variety of services to support the grantees. The contracts were in the areas of:

Assessment and Accountability: Tracking the progress and successes of students and the performance of local programs through a standardized assessment system that allows the State Office to goals and objectives are being met. Use of the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) provides a common assessment for all levels of ABE, ELL, and ASE/HSE, including IET programs. Local service providers can access program-specific data results and are given technical assistance on analyzing the data for local reporting, program planning, and instructional purposes. The State Office offered regional trainings to support local providers with the transition to the new federally-approved assessment CASAS GOALS for FY20 and regular CASAS basic implementation training, as well linking the CASAS to instruction.

Technology and Distance Learning: The State Office promotes, models, and provides support around technology integration at the program administration and classroom levels. Schoology allows for a space for online and blended professional development instruction and for local service providers to develop student-level online learning opportunities. Membership in the IDEAL consortium provides the State Office access to professional development materials, including a summer institute for members, a facilitated course, and technical assistance to help programs develop and implement a distance learning plan. A contract continues with a web developer to provide services for the Maine Adult Education PD Portal, a one-stop, web-based destination for locating, registering, and tracking professional development.

Professional Development: Leadership funds supported contracts for high-quality professional development. The State Office identifies experienced, high-performing practitioners at the local level and invests in their training so that professional development efforts and priorities can be supported regionally, as needed. In fall 2018, two local practitioners facilitated the LINC'S Adult Numeracy Instruction workshop series, building state capacity to continue offering the training independently. The State Office also contracted with national level experts in mathematics instruction, career assessments and interpretation, and monitoring. Funds also supported State Office personnel in training in Reading Apprenticeship and its connection to writing instruction.

2018-2019 Professional Development/Technical Assistance by Category

This table represents the formal events hosted by the State Office. It does not include the on-demand technical assistance provided. Schoology is also used extensively as a place to conduct classes (both facilitated and self-directed), post webinars and as a resource site for multiple “how to” tutorials.

Category	Number of events
Assessment	9

College and Career Readiness	13
Instructional Practice	15
Data Collection and Analysis	2
Advising	5
Administrator/Leadership	16
Learning Technology	3
WorkReady	3
WIOA/AEFLA	2

2. Performance Data Analysis

The overall assessment of core programs for Maine Adult Education was mixed for the 2018 program year. Some areas showed continued improvement while others leveled off or even declined. Given this information, in-depth data analysis becomes crucial in helping us isolate and identify key areas of focus that will lead to improved outcomes for our learners. Plans to further increase performance are outlined by the specific core indicators listed below.

Maine Enrollments	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	% Growth/ Decline from 2017-2018	5 Year % Growth/ Decline
Overall Estimated Population (in millions)	1.328	1.330	1.336	1.338	1.342	0.30%	1.1%
Overall NRS Enrollment	5,730	6,317	5,949	6,006	5,830	-2.93%	1.7%
Number Attaining a Secondary School Diploma	893	941	810	947	799	-15.63%	-10.5%

Enrollment – Although enrollment in Maine Adult Education fell approximately 3% from the previous year, it has increased 1.7% in the last five years, keeping pace with Maine’s overall population growth of 1.1%. The number of secondary school credentials issued (799) decreased 15% from the previous year and 10% from five years ago. This decrease may be the beginning of a trend based in part on Maine’s decreasing school-age population and increasing high school graduation rate, or it may be due in part to an increasing number of higher-level high school completion students who need little or no academic preparation to pass their high school equivalency tests. Maine issued 1,228 high school credentials in the 2018-19 academic year, which means that 429 (35%) of the completers were not on the NRS Tables. We will examine this 35% to ensure the data integrity of all adult learners receiving services through adult education.

Maine	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019
NRS Measurable Skill Gain	28%	30%	36%	37%	34%

Measurable Skill Gain (MSG)– The MSG rate for Maine Adult Education is 34%. This is a 3% decrease from the previous year, but 6% above five years ago. When broken down by level, ESL levels I – VI increased their MSG by 2% from the previous year. Data analysis indicated the primary factor for this decline was the overall decrease in Maine’s post-test rate. NRS Table 4B indicated that 48% of learners post-tested achieved an MSG. Clearly Maine Adult Education has a positive effect on learner outcomes, but posttest rates will need to increase to raise MSG rate. Toward this end, we revamped quarterly data reports to require action plans for any providers not meeting performance targets and instituted a campaign to raise awareness by providing increased professional development of best practices through recorded webinars.

Maine	2014- 2015	2015- 2016	2016- 2017	2017- 2018	2018- 2019
Posttest Percentage	56%	55%	65%	57%	54%
Average Academic Hours	89.3	95.0	81.8	78.0	79.3

Posttest Percentage and Academic Intensity – Maine’s posttest percentage continued to decline in 2018-2019. At 54%, it is now 2% below where it was five years ago. With fewer learners being post-tested, Maine’s increase in academic intensity has no noticeable effect since potential learner gains are not being captured. The further decline in posttest rates suggests that local providers may have mistakenly thought that post-testing was less important, given the expanded definition of an MSG to include a secondary school diploma. 2017-2018 data reinforced this misconception. Even with a sharp decline in Maine’s posttest rate, there was still an increase in MSG. This year, however, the MSG also declined, and the posttest rate was 6% below the state benchmark of 60%. The decreasing posttest rate is a serious concern and has renewed our commitment to increasing the rate above 60% in 2019-2020. The first step has been increasing awareness of this issue to local providers. In addition to webinars and technical assistance, quarterly monitoring will require all local providers not meeting the 60% posttest rate to develop an action plan for meeting the State benchmark. Continued poor performance will result in increased state support to address the problem and may even lead to a decrease in funding. We are confident that increased scrutiny will turn this trend around and produce better outcomes in the coming year.

Maine	2017- 2018	2018- 2019
Employment 2Q after Exit	43%	33%
Employment 4Q After Exit	65%	32%
Median Earnings 2Q After Exit	\$4,192	\$4,349
Attained HS credential & Enrolled in PS	14%	10%
Attained HS credential & Employed in 2Q	48%	39%

Employment, Median Wage, and Postsecondary Outcomes –By working collaboratively with the Department of Labor, Maine Adult Education developed a data match system that allows the comprehensive and accurate reporting of employment rate and median wage data for Maine learners who provide their Social Security Number. 2018-2019 data is complete and establishes a baseline to compare performance outcomes in the coming years. Because Maine instituted a data match against UI data to collect employment outcomes, learner social security numbers and a signed release for data matching are necessary to provide the most complete data picture. In this reporting period, only 65% of exited learners shared their SSN with adult education. To increase learner data match percent for 2019-2020, we established a 90% data match benchmark and added a required data match rate metric to the quarterly performance measures report. To raise awareness, we have also initiated an Emergency Response Team compiled of local adult education personnel charged with developing best practices for obtaining SSN releases and sharing their expertise statewide. This effort is already having an impact. The most recent quarterly report demonstrates initial success with most local providers showing a data match rate of 80% or higher.

3. Integration with One-stop Partners

In PY18, the state office served as the entity for meeting one-stop requirements, with the transition to this being a local program obligation included in the FY19 AEFLA competition. This Program Year was also a time of rebuilding collaborations and programming for the one-stop system as funds did not go out to the workforce boards until December of 2018.

While the state core partners were revitalizing relationships and trying to determine infrastructure costs, the local adult education programs continued to provide a wide variety of services. A few local programs operated within the footprint of a career center, but most served within their own facilities. Due to the state's size and rural nature, many adults are physically closer to adult education providers than career centers and our programs are more accessible with day and evening hours.

Career services provided through adult education include: outreach, intake, interviewing regarding prior experiences, goals, barriers, etc., initial academic assessments and inventories regarding aptitudes and career interests, career advising, determination of appropriate classroom and/or workforce training placement, workforce preparation activities, provision of information on support services, costs (if any) of services, referrals to other agencies if appropriate, development of individual academic and employment plans, English Language Acquisition and Integrated Education and Training programs.

A lot of time was spent in FY18 on the development of a common portal to be used to identify, refer, and track common core program clients. This system, to be deployed in January 2020, should be a major step forward in identifying, serving and tracking common clients more efficiently and effectively.

Discussions with MDOL regarding infrastructure costs have begun but no final decision or assessments were made during PY18.

4. Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) Program

- Due to state issues between DOL and local workforce force boards, Maine was unable to conduct a WIOA competition since the spring of FY14. The same two local programs have been funded since FY14 and that grant cycle ended June 30, 2017. An extension was granted by OCTAE until Maine could do a new competition and new grants were awarded for June 1, 2019. The continuation grants were developed to align as closely as possible with the WIOA IELCE requirements and included an IET component.
- IELCE/IET Integration – The two programs that received IELCE funds are identified as Program 1 and Program 2. It continues to be a challenge to fully integrate the 3 program elements.

Adult Education Program 1 used funds to develop and offer a CNA program with priority on serving ESOL levels 1-4 and to develop a Construction IET to be offered in FY20. Program 2 offered an ELL/CNA program developed for those ELLs with a CASAS range of 225-239. Program 2 also worked on the development of a Teller Training program to begin in January 2020.

Programs 1 and 2 used a team-teaching approach to deliver the civics, literacy, work readiness and employability skills training in an integrated approach all focused on a career as a CNA. Program 1 students needed to reach Level 5 to gain state required reading levels to enter the CNA program. However, in preparation for that step, their classroom curricula and instruction included healthcare vocabulary; learning about patient confidentiality; roles and responsibilities of various entry level healthcare positions; and care giver skills such as hand washing, bed making, communication, sanitation, body systems, vital signs and familiarity with healthcare tools. Program 2 also incorporated medical terminology into their program.

It has taken a few years to get away from the former modular approach to delivery of instruction.

Many of Maine's English language learners were healthcare professionals before immigrating to the United States. Though it is highly unlikely that very many will ever return to their former careers as physicians, becoming a CNA is a reentry point. Many start on this pathway to go on to be EMTs, phlebotomists, and paramedics.

Supports offered - In addition work readiness and employability skills in these CNA trainings, students received assistance in creating resumes, interviewing, and completion of job applications. Employers were involved in reviewing the program to ensure it aligned with their needs.

Challenges to employment – As a rural state, transportation is a major barrier to employment. In the two cities where these adult education programs are located, there is some public transportation, but available rental units are sparse and not affordable. It also takes lower level ESOL learners (levels 1-3) a long time to progress to the point of meeting the state CNA requirements.

The two funded adult education programs are in different workforce regions. Both boards identified a need for trained workers in the medical, hospitality and construction industries. Although retail and CNA may not be considered high wage positions, in Maine they are in high demand and acknowledged as critical to the needs of the state’s employers and be an entry point to higher levels of employment and income.

Program 1 CNA - 49 learners enrolled, 35 post-tested (71%) and 23 (47%) made measurable skill gains. At the time the program year ended, none of the learners had completed the CNA program and that would happen over the summer.

Program 2 CNA - 39 learners enrolled, 30 completed and 29 passed the state exam on the first try. State Office will follow up to learn why only post-tested 21 (54%) and only one showed a measurable skill gain.

5. Adult Education Standards Optional—Describe implementation efforts, challenges, and any lessons learned.

Maine adopted CCRS for Adults in 2014 and continues to train staff in effective implementation and monitors progress. Ongoing training is offered to new staff.

6. Programs for Corrections and Other Institutionalized Individuals

In PY18, the Department of Corrections no longer used AEFLA funds for literacy services, nor were local providers using their own AEFLA funds to serve the DOC facilities. Instead, the DOC used their own staff. Some adult education providers served learners in the county jails, but they have not shared recidivism data. We will be working with the county jails in PY19 to determine how we might receive recidivism data. NRS Table 10 does show the number of incarcerated people served.