North Dakota

# 2018 – 2019 Narrative Report

## State Leadership Funds (Section 223)

(a) North Dakota (ND) Adult Education (AE) program continues to work closely with WIOA core partners in helping to better serve the students/clients (eligible participants) of ND. AE also continues to work closely with/on the Governors Workforce Development Council (State Board) (WDC) to ensure adult education and literacy activities remain on the forefront of strategies to fill workforce needs. Regular meetings occur with the core partners, this committee is a branch off of WDC and called the WDC administrative team. Time and work is centered around aligning work and initiatives around the State Plan. Currently, a new State Plan is being drafted. This has brought us together even more in the past few months and also gave rise to a collaborative online Microsoft Team that allows us to communicate on a different level and platform. Ensuring alignment and working relationships at the local level is a key priority. Solid growth has occurred in the area of identifying services for participants across the WIOA programs. We have also been working on a new system to track co-enrollments. Hopefully we will be able to run a data match via SSN to get a more accurate count. Also ongoing, the WDC has created 3 groups or task force committees to concentrate on initiatives. AE is assisting in the realm of individuals with barriers and this work will provide even greater resources for students.

The State AE office informally tracks professional development (PD) needs by taking note of questions asked by multiple adult learning centers (ALCs), trends in errors in the data systems, or new items/processes that are either upcoming or recently implemented. Formally, the State office sends out PD request email asking Directors to share what they are noticing in regard to professional growth or teacher performance. Continuing to improve, even for our higher performing ALCs, is the model. We want to take out State performance from “good to great”. The North Dakota Association for Lifelong Learning (NDALL) assists the State office in finding PD opportunities and also delivering PD. NDALL also plays a large roll in orchestrating the annual Adult Education Fall Conference. The conference took place September 18-20, 2019 and also included folks from across the state who work in ND alternative high schools. Conference evaluations were positive and also gave us some solid feedback to improve for 2020. NDALL puts together a conference committee that includes Directors, adult education teachers, and alternative high school principals/staff. The adult education strand of the conference included the following topics: TABE 11/12 training (introductory and advanced sessions), Google Boot Camp for Digital Skills, Mindfulness at School-tools and practice, Self Care for Teachers, iPad training, Applied Andragogy and Growth Mindset, Math Tips and Tricks, EL Experiential Practice, Paced Classroom, Vaping information, Humor and Games in the Classroom, College admission information, Native American Culture Communication, Effective Relationships through Effective Communication Skills, Roundtable work broken down by ABE/GED, ELL, Alternative HS (also included a tour of the State Penitentiary to include the education area). Other PD opportunities outside of the annual conference included additional TABE training, LACES (student database) 2 day face-to-face training, Microsoft Teams training, IET/IELCE training, and opportunities for local staff to attend nation wide trainings such as the GED Testing conference or the COABE conference. The State Office (State Director) attended multiple nation-wide conferences such as GEDTS, MPAEA, COABE, New Directors Meeting, and NTI.

The State office acts as the first stop for all technical assistance. This allows for a quick response back to local staff and if needing to take a step further and reach out further, the State office can track and coordinate this inquiry and response. Typically, an answer that would go above the State office will then be posted in our AE Microsoft Team (Teams), so it is documented and accessible by every AE staff member in the State. Two of these AE Microsoft Teams exist, one for those at Director level and then one for all staff. Technical assistance is constant, and questions are encouraged to ensure consistency and accurate implementation. Microsoft Teams has also opened lines of communication between the sites themselves and allow for best practice questions/answers. The threads of conversations are very encouraging to see. Funding used to pay for our databases and systems have built in cost for technical assistance and trainings as well.

Federal and state compliance monitoring last took place at the end of 2017. Site visits occurred in 2018-2019, more of an informal check in, data review, general networking, and questions about a wide range of needs. Federal and state compliance monitoring will take place in 2019-2020, after the competitive grant process. Desk audits of data happen regularly, at least monthly, and a data review is sent out quarterly. Lastly, AE holds an annual Directors meeting to discuss previous years data, current issues, best practice, large scale changes, and other items to steer AE for the future.

## Performance Data Analysis

The State office often reviews performance data and looks for trends and/or measures that cause concern or that should be commended. Each ALC is looked at individually and this typically occurs monthly. LACES training and PD is concentrated on teaching Directors and staff how to quickly check these data sets and then, more importantly, to use this data in decision making and student academic planning. The overall data performance measures that include the TABE assessment as a major player took a dip. The full transition to TABE 11/12 occurred in 2018-2019 and plays a very large role in this drop-in performance. State office is confident that this baseline year data will be improved on moving forward, as PD and a full year use has allowed the ALCs to adjust to the nuances of the new assessment as well as curriculum better aligned to the assessment. The State office fully expects a rebound with all MSG/PoP data in 2019-2020.

PoP with MSG ABE Total (Table 4) 42.7%

PoP with MSG ESL Total (Table 4) 41.9%

PoP with MSG Grand Total (Table 4) 42.4%

PoP with MSG ABE Total (Table 4b) 46.4%

PoP with MSG ESL Total (Table 4b) 65.5%

PoP with MSG Grand Total (Table 4b) 54.2%

Employment Rate (Quarter 2) 56.5%

Employment Rate (Quarter 4) 57.7%

Median Earnings (Quarter 2) $5132.90

Credential Rate 61.6%

The data above is looked at closely at the end of the year. As mentioned, during the year, audits are done monthly, and reports are sent out quarterly. Also, two times a year, a deeper dive into LACES produces a Data Analysis. This deeper dive goes into student level data and reveals small but very relevant pieces of information such as students missing small items such as Highest Education Level that would keep them from being an NRS participant or NRS participants post-tested below minimum hours. There are around 15 different criteria that are involved in the Data Analysis. LACES staff can do these for a fee, the State Director can perform them if time allows. The last piece of data that is shared with the ALCs and Directors is more of an overall look and includes GED data as well. This report takes a look at Table 4, posttest percentage, NRS participants v. students with 1 hour but not NRS participants, GED Pass Rate as defined by GED Testing Service, and a real Passed/Given percentage on GED official exams. Each quarter the ALCs have to look closely at their data for the Quarterly Report that is required before funding is released. Performance data is examined at the local level to drive increased performance and also professional development needs. We also try to align newer local Directors or Directors who are struggling a bit in a certain area with a Director who is excelling in that same area. It is helpful to hear best practice and a plan to improve from their cohort as well as the State level. Lastly, fine tuning the data match process and working with our core WIOA partners on utilizing the SWIS, we hope to continue to get closer to the true number of folks who can help our employment and median earnings outcome data. In ND, we use data match and also survey at the site level to try and obtain as many positive matches as we can. Fine tuning the data match process has involved being precise on when we run the report, when sites should check the data system after matches are imported, and lastly increasing the effectiveness of LACES tables and searches to make this process more user friendly. North Dakota has a very low unemployment rate when comparing to other states and also, according to multiple studies by WIOA core partners and the Governors Workforce Development Council, more open jobs than people available/looking for work.

## Integration with One-stop Partners

Job Service of North Dakota (JSND) is the main provider of career services in our single workforce state. An ongoing MOU between ND Governor, his Workforce Development Council (WDC), and JSND explains they are to provide and make available the career services described in WIOA and 34 CFR 463 subpart J. The MOU also includes language dealing with core and required partners of WIOA to work as a one-stop system to more effectively serve students and participants well accomplishing the Governor’s workforce goals laid out in the WIOA State Plan.

AE in ND provides basic career services by assisting participants in eligibility determinations, providing information on available programs and assistance offered, assessing skill/academic levels, sharing in-demand occupation information, access to current job openings and skills/requirements for those positions, postsecondary training information for job attainment, providing information about support services available in the area and statewide, assistance with financial aid and guidance to individuals who specialize in this area but also help assist in filling out forms such as FAFSA. Meaning assistance in the above areas is provided, but not provided in all areas as listed in 34 CFR subpart J. Some individualized career services are provided, these would be pre-vocational services or soft-skills such as communication skills, interviewing skills, acting as a professional etc., work and training experiences, workforce preparation activities, financial literacy, digital literacy or technology based training, and English language acquisition and in some local sites, IET/IELCE programs. Follow up is conducted for students who exit AE. Areas of the career services that AE does not cover are covered by one-stop partners. These services, for example, would be placement assistance, more intense labor market information, unemployment compensation claim assistance, diagnostic testing and other non-academic testing or assessment, development of more intense individualized employment plan.

Core partners have committed to the WIOA required Infrastructure Cost Agreement. ND did request a waiver of Section 121(h)(1)(B)(i) and 121(h)(2)(C)(i) of WIOA concerning funding of one-stop infrastructure. The waiver was not approved. Currently, the infrastructure cost (no co-location) for AE remains being calculated on co-enrolled participants. It is uncertain whether this practice will be modified with a new State Plan being drafted and the waiver being denied.

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

The agreement resulting from the first competitive grant process is still in place. The competition was for three program years and the first program year was 2017-2018. ND DPI awarded one grant to one Regional provider and that was the Fargo Adult Learning Center. They were the only ones to apply. A new competitive grant process was just initiated with the release of the request for proposal on December 20, 2019. Much like the first competition, ND DPI will award one grant to one Regional provider.

All AE providers in ND have been trained in the concepts of IELCE and IET. Fargo is the only site that is mandated to provide both services, an IELCE program that includes IET. Ideally, with increased knowledge of the programs and educating stakeholders, we can secure additional resources to duplicate the work being done in Fargo. It is a goal to expand our IET offerings across the state. Currently, talks are in place with CTE to form a partnership that would allow AE students access to trainings/courses that K12 students have access to. Also, access to some of the postsecondary CTE options while students are working toward their GED. CTE and AE share two physical locations currently. There are also conversations on-going with TrainND about cost reduction and how other core partners can help alleviate the cost. These two concepts will, hopefully, drive future IET offerings. The Fargo ALC currently assists students in achieving their C.N.A. license. This is an in-demand industry and the training piece is assisted by an employer who very gladly hires individuals who finish the program. This partnership and program are working very well, we are in search of ways to duplicate this program for other pathways. The one lesson that really stuck out in setting this process up was finding a partner to assist with training. With funding that is somewhat limited for all that is required in an IELCE program, Fargo ALC had to really sell the idea of the program being a feeder program for filling open C.N.A. positions. All local sites in ND are aware of the in-demand occupation list and are connected with the local workforce through advisory committees and work with local job service centers. There are only two or three more sites that could incorporate a solid IELCE program (serving ELL students). Fargo has agreed to mentor and share best practices, challenges, and lessons learned from implementing their program. The hope is to less implementation time and also keep costs to a minimum. Conversations and partnerships are in place, the next step or progression would include moving from meetings/conversations to action.

## Adult Education Standards

North Dakota Adult Education program adopted the College and Career Readiness standards (CCR) for Adult Education in 2015. NDDPI, in regard to K-12 standards, began to write and release North Dakotas own version of standards. The Mathematics and English Language/Literacy standards came out in 2017 and the Science and Social Studies standards were released in 2019. The plan is to, after an initial review, do a deeper dive to compare/contrast the North Dakota Content Standards and the CCR standards. Both have a concentration on 21st Century Skills and the 4 C’s. The assessments used in Adult Education are also built upon the CCR standards. ND K-12, as apart of ESSA Plan, recognizes Choice Ready as a way to assess and ensure students are ready for post-secondary education or training. Work has begun to align with the work we do in Adult Education. In an early review, plenty of alignment exists with the concentration of post-secondary and education in Adult Education.

## Programs for Corrections Education and the Education of Other Institutionalized Individuals (AEFLA Section 225)

Federal AEFLA and State fund are provided to the ND Department of Corrections and Rehabilitations (DOCR) for Corrections Education and the education of Other Institutionalized Individuals. In ND, if an individual is incarcerated at a DOCR facility and does not have a high school diploma or its equivalent (as determined by the State), they are (by law) mandated to work towards one. Recidivism, as defined by the ND DOCR, is an offender committing a new crime and not returning on a status offense, such as a parole violation within three years.

ND DOCR can specifically extrapolate data for adults in custody who were served with state and federal adult education funds for the time period of July 2018-June 2019 required by OCTAE. This data was requested of DOCR and provided to DPO. A U.S. Sentencing Commission report on recidivism among federal prisoners, released on January 24, 2019, showed that nearly 64% of prisoners who had been convicted of violent offenses were arrested within either years compared with about 40% of those convicted of nonviolent offenses. The data confirms national recidivism rates for adults ranges from 64% to 42% and for youth is 34%; ND rates are calculated differently between the Division of Adult Services (DAS) (re-offended within 3 years) and the Division of Juvenile Services (DJS) (re-offended within 1 year). DAS recidivism rate is 39%; DJS recidivism is 15%. With that explained, additional data regarding recidivism rates for students while incarcerated is as follows:

* Students with only a reading program: DJS 36% & DAS 17%
* Students completed GED/HSD: DJS 16.4% & DAS 7.9%
* Students with GED/HSD and workforce training/post-secondary: DJS 10.3% & DAS 6.9%