Pennsylvania Narrative Report 2018-19

1. **State Leadership Funds** (AEFLA Section 223)

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) Division of Adult Education (division) used federal section 223 state leadership funds to support a system of projects that provides services that address all of the activities required in section 223 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), plus several additional permissible activities. In spring 2017, the division competed section 223 funds and awarded grants for five projects: Professional Learning Opportunities Project; Technology Project; Workforce Project; Management Information Systems Project; and Communications Project. In spring 2018, the division competed section 223 funds for an additional project, the Distance Education Technical Assistance Project. The system provides technical assistance and professional development opportunities in areas such as using data, improving instruction, and working with partners. In addition, the system disseminates relevant information about resources and promising practices to local programs. The system supports relevant, job-embedded professional development that helps staff at local programs build capacity and assume the responsibility for implementation and evaluation of program improvement and professional development at their agencies.

The core of the professional development system (PDS) is the Professional Learning Opportunities Project. Project staff consists of a team of five consultants. Each consultant worked directly with staff at assigned agencies, who were led by an agency professional development team consisting of the administrator and an in-house professional development specialist. The consultants had a minimum of three individual meetings with each agency team during the program year. Consultants provided program improvement and professional development support and guidance. They helped agencies support continuous program improvement through professional learning and provided support for the implementation of standards-aligned lessons and integration of instructional advances into adult education classrooms. All agencies had professional learning communities focused on standards implementation. Consultants attended professional learning community meetings at each agency to provide feedback and support on the implementation of this model for professional development. In 2018-19, the consultants also began guiding some instructors in the peer observation process. This work will expand in 2019-20. In addition, consultants worked with agency leadership teams to articulate evidence of teacher and student change and discuss the outcomes of their Program Improvement-Professional Development plans and to talk about evidence to support the outcomes. In addition to its full-time staff, the Professional Learning Opportunities Project also drew on the expertise in the field and contracted with local program practitioners who have demonstrated expertise in certain content areas to serve as coaches and course facilitators and as members of course development teams.

The PDS worked with content experts, online course instructors, and other professional development facilitators to update and develop both online and face-to-face formal professional development activities, focusing on on-demand courses and the use of combined external/facilitated resources. To ensure high-quality activities, the PDS used an instructional design process that started with identifying a need, followed by a scan for existing resources, and, if nothing suitable existed, the convening of a design team. The design team then worked together to create an instructional design plan for each course so that the instruction was engaging and tied to clear objectives, and the courses had assessments that allowed the participant to show achievement of the objectives in measurable ways. Finally, each offering had follow-up support built into the instructional design plan. In 2018-19, all courses had an

assigned course coach to provide targeted, specialized assistance to course participants that supported the implementation of new knowledge and skills and change in teaching practice.

In addition to supporting standards-based instruction at the program level, the PDS focused on improving instruction in specific content areas by offering five year-long instructional institutes. Programs were required to send a team to at least one institute; some programs opted to send teams to more than one. The institutes were Student Achievement in Reading (STAR); Adult Numeracy Institute (ANI); English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS); Supplemental Distance Learning (SDL); and Parenting Education and Interactive Literacy Activities (PE/ILA). STAR and ANI are nationally developed trainings that the PDS offered using national trainers with some added coaching. The ELPS, SDL, and PE/ILA institutes were all designed and delivered by PDS staff and content experts. The institutes included yearlong coaching and culminated in in the creation of action plans for the implementation of the new knowledge and skills in 2019-20. A yearlong technical assistance activity for section 243 Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) grantees was also developed and is discussed below.

Beginning in 2018-19, Pennsylvania revised its distance education policy to require all section 231 grantees to offer supplemental computer-based distance education to students who request it. Local programs needed help providing quality supplemental computer-based distance education and aligning it with classroom work. To identify program needs, the Distance Education Technical Assistance project staff developed and disseminated a supplemental distance learning needs assessment. The Distance Education Technical Assistance project designed the SDL institute using this information and used content from Project IDEAL courses. Project staff also developed a procedure for reviewing existing computer-based distance education products to ensure that only high-quality, standards-aligned products were recommended to the division for approval for local program use.

The Workforce Project focuses their work on assisting staff in local adult basic education programs to connect services to the local, regional, and statewide workforce needs. The project also helps local programs to understand their role as partners in the workforce development system and one-stop centers and to develop relationships and partnerships with one-stop center staff, local workforce boards, training providers, employers, and other workforce partners to build a system that addresses both worker and employer needs.

In addition to helping programs align adult education services with other workforce services, the Workforce Project serves as the PDS content expert in the development of professional learning opportunities related to WIOA, employer engagement, corrections, and postsecondary transitions. In 2018-19 project staff served as subject matter experts and course facilitators for two new online facilitated courses, *Using Labor Market Data Analysis for Program Planning* and *Effective Employer Engagement within the Workforce Development System*. Project staff also developed a professional development course titled *Reentry Resources and Best Practices for Working with Ex-Offenders* that included a face-to-face training and individualized follow-up technical assistance. They facilitated this training three times across the state and offered it to Title II providers and their workforce system partners. Additionally, this project was involved in the technical assistance to section 243 grantees discussed in the IELCE section below.

This is the second year of the Technology Project providing instructional design services for the PDS and using technology to develop and deliver professional development. Project staff members work with the other PDS projects to develop high-quality professional development for the field. The development process starts when the Professional Learning Opportunities Project staff identifies a professional development need. They select a subject matter expert (SME),

and then convene a design team, which includes the SME, an instructional designer from the Technology Project, and a Professional Learning Opportunities Project staff member. The instructional designer leads the development of the instructional design plan and works with the SME to develop the content for the course. Technology Project staff ensure that the final product is accessible, follows the instructional design plan, and adheres to graphic design principles. Technology Project staff then enter the courses in the *PD Portal* and open registration according to Professional Learning Opportunities Project's implementation plan. The Technology Project also worked with the Professional Learning Opportunities Project to develop 18 staff induction and tutor training modules this program year. These online modules varied in length from about 30 minutes to one hour and included multi-media images and videos. The modules used a new software which allowed the Technology Project staff to create more opportunities for learner engagement through interactive questions, matching activities, drag and drops, and quizzes. Research has shown that this type of interactive content leads to increased learner engagement and retention of the material.

Technology Project staff also provided technical assistance to the division and PDS on how to increase the digital literacy skills of practitioners and adult learners. Project staff worked with the division and Professional Learning Opportunities Project staff to develop a plan to address digital literacy.

Using data for decision-making and for continuous program improvement is an ongoing focus of state leadership activities. The PDS provided technical assistance, training, and support to local programs in the collection, reporting, use, and analysis of program data with the goals of ensuring accurate data and improving program services and student outcomes. To assist both the division and programs with monitoring and using data for decision making and program improvement, the MIS Project created and annually updates an Access template, which is linked to the web-based data reporting system. The MIS Project produced monthly agency data check reports for program staff and division advisors to alert them to potential data errors and assisted agencies with preparing data for the end of the program year. Program staff can produce reports for individual teachers and classes to evaluate the impact of program improvement and professional development activities. Throughout spring 2019, in addition to their regular work with programs, the MIS Project collaborated with the Professional Learning Opportunities Project to develop a data institute, held in August 2019, to promote improvement in data policy and practices at local programs.

The Communications Project disseminates information to the field regarding upcoming professional learning opportunities developed by the PDS and other opportunities being offered through LINCS, Project IDEAL, and other vetted sources. The project maintains a resources website, *Pennsylvania Adult Education Resources*, that has current and relevant information. All resources meet the guidelines for Section 508 Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Standards. The website features resources created by the PDS or submitted by local programs. The project also sends out monthly newsletters that promote upcoming learning opportunities, research articles, and links that are relevant to adult educators.

The leadership projects monitored and evaluated the effect that professional development and technical assistance had on local program activities through a continuous improvement model. Every formal professional learning opportunity included a required evaluation. Additionally, the use of individual reflection forms was encouraged for informal opportunities. All of these evaluations and reflections were used along with program improvement plans to give a full picture of program improvement and change. The PDS reviewed these evaluations and reflections to understand how agencies were changing practice. Project staff also produced

reports from the online course management system for division and PDS staff to support ongoing monitoring and improvement of professional development services.

The collaboration and coordination of services among the state leadership projects strengthened the efforts of adult education and family literacy providers to integrate data-driven program improvement and professional development, as well as to begin evaluating the impact of that work on program services and student outcomes. As a team, the system worked to coordinate methods of documentation, data collection, and service delivery to ensure that programs receive collaborative, seamless support that ultimately benefits learners. Progress was made to create a truly integrated professional development system that supports high-quality, job-embedded professional development with the ultimate goal of improving student outcomes.

2. Performance Data Analysis

Through the grant competition in spring of 2018, Pennsylvania awarded 31 *Adult Basic Education Direct Service* grants (federal and state funds combined), one *Statewide Distance Learning Project* grant (federal funds), and seven *Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education* grants (federal funds). In addition, there were 15 state-funded family literacy programs. The number of participants in Pennsylvania in 2018-19 was 17,155. An additional 5,204 adults expressed intent to participate in adult education or family literacy services but did not reach 12 contact hours. Thus, almost one-quarter of individuals who completed intake did not reach participant status. This attrition rate was similar across agencies and was the reason many programs did not meet their contracted enrollment in 2018-19. Programs that were below 75 percent of contracted enrollment as of April 1, 2019 were required to submit an action plan to address low enrollment as part of the grant continuation process for 2019-20. Increasing student persistence was also a focus of discussion at the annual administrators meeting at the beginning on 2019-20.

Pennsylvania continues to experience an increase in the percentage of participants at ESL levels and a decrease in the percentage of participants at ABE levels. In 2018-19, participants in ESL levels comprised 36.6 percent of students, an increase of .4 percentage points. This increase occurred despite a drop of over 75 percent in enrollment in section 243 programs (435 in 2018-19 versus 1,919 in 2017-18) due to the significant changes in that programing. Another trend that continued is the decrease in the percentage of participants age 16-24, which dropped from 26.8 percent in 2017-18 to 26.1 percent. At the other end of the age range, the number of participants age 60 and over increased from 4.5 to 4.7 percent of participants. These trends reflect state trends. Pennsylvania continues to be a key state for immigration, secondary migration, and family reunification. At the same time, the high school graduation rate is steadily improving, reducing the need among young people to earn a high school equivalency credential.

Pennsylvania's measurable skill gain (MSG) outcome dropped for the second year in a row: 43.85 percent, a drop of .13 percentage points, and below Pennsylvania's target of 47 percent. The percentage of posttested participants who showed education functioning level (EFL) gain (Table 4b) also dropped again, from 67.31 percent in 2017-18 to 66.06 percent. Based on review of real-time data during 2018-19, the division anticipated these decreases and used Table 4b to identify programs at risk of not meeting the state-imposed EFL gain target. Programs whose percentage of posttested participants with an EFL gain was less than 66 percent as of April 1, 2019 were required to submit an action plan as part of the grant continuation process for 2019-20.

Pennsylvania allowed programs to begin using the TABE 11/12 on January 1, 2019. Anecdotally, programs that used TABE 11/12 during 2018-19 reported that many students dropped an educational functioning level when assessed with TABE 11/12 as compared to TABE 9/10. They also reported a drop in the number of students enrolling at ABE levels 5 or 6. The Division of Adult Education plans to look at this more closely using 2019-20 assessment results.

On exit-based outcome measures, Pennsylvania showed improvement over 2017-18 results in all three employment outcomes. The number and percent of participants who attained a secondary credential and were employed within one year of exit both increased. On the other hand, Pennsylvania again had a very low outcome for "attainment of a secondary credential and enrolled in postsecondary education or training." This is partly because Pennsylvania included participants in this row who did not attain a secondary credential at all. However, it is also due to missing data; the division's *Adult Student Postsecondary Enrollment Certification Form* did not collect the date of postsecondary enrollment. Without a date of enrollment, the division could not determine that students in the secondary credential cohort met the requirement to be enrolled in postsecondary education or training within one year of exit. The division revised the form during 2018-19 to include the date of enrollment into the postsecondary institution or program. However, due to the timeframe for credential attainment reporting, that change was not in place in time for data matches for 2019 reporting.

A future focus for improvement will be in the area of tracking and documenting postsecondary credential attainment. Currently, Pennsylvania only uses a data match with the National Student Clearinghouse, which captures mostly two- and four-year degree attainment. Pennsylvania's participation in the Credential Attainment Cohort will inform this work.

3. Integration with One-stop Partners

PDE delegated the required one-stop roles and responsibilities to local providers. All programs that receive federal Title II funds through an *Adult Basic Education Direct Service* grant or an *Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program* grant from the Division of Adult Education are required to be one-stop partners and signatories to the memorandum of understanding (MOU) and must contribute to infrastructure and other costs. This decision was made because the division requires all funded programs to be full service providers, whose participants can benefit from the one-stop system. Family literacy programs funded with state funds are allowed, but not required, to be one-stop partners.

In local areas with only one adult basic education provider, that provider is the sole Title II partner and must meet all the roles and responsibilities itself. In local areas with more than one adult basic education provider, providers, including subgrantees, must work together to agree on how each agency will be involved and to what extent. Involvement and contributions vary depending on the size of the program and its proximity to a one-stop center. The adult basic education programs must ensure that access to adult basic education services and the provision of career services are available at all comprehensive one-stop centers in the area. Not all providers have to participate in all comprehensive one-stop centers, but all comprehensive one-stop centers must have at least one Title II adult education partner providing access to services. In 2018-19, thirty-six programs report having Title II funded staff physically located at the one-stop center. Of those, twenty-two also provide access by training partner programs or by direct linkage. Six programs report having partners and direct linkage. One program reports using only technology; they use an online live chat system that is monitored by their adult education coordinators and is available during the local one-stop center's business hours.

All infrastructure costs were negotiated at the local level. The state option was not necessary in any local workforce areas. Funded programs report a total of $172,691.82 in federal funds and $55,751.43 in state funds used for infrastructure cost contributions. Two community colleges with adult basic education programs used college funds to cover the infrastructure costs. Two other community colleges provide office space for the one-stop center as an in-kind contribution. Eight community-based organizations and three local education agencies reported using private funds to cover some or all of their infrastructure cost contributions.

As full-service programs, all Title II funded adult basic education programs provided all five of the career services applicable for Title II. Division policy requires programs to complete an orientation, intake, and initial assessment of skills in literacy and numeracy or English language proficiency with all students prior to assigning them to instructional services. Programs must use one of the approved standardized assessments to determine educational functioning level. During the orientation and intake process, programs are expected to talk to students to identify any potential barriers to successful participation in adult education activities and to provide information on and refer the students to resources to help them address any barriers that are identified. Students may also be referred to other core programs, especially Title I Youth activities, as appropriate.

While students are receiving adult education and literacy services, program staff continue to provide information and referrals to support services as needed. Furthermore, staff work with students to help them identify their abilities and interests and to develop plans to successfully complete adult education services and transition to their next steps. As part of this planning, program staff help students who are interested in postsecondary education or training to research their options and evaluate the pros and cons of each option. When students are ready to transition, program staff help them complete the necessary paperwork and make the appropriate referrals.

Title II funded programs continue to work with their one-stop system partners in other ways. Thirty-two providers reported having some instructional services co-located at a one-stop center. Forty report providing outreach, orientation, or intake services to non-Title II participants at the one-stop. Thirty-three report providing assessment services. Thirty-five participate in one-stop staff meetings.

PDE continues to work with L&I to ensure that each of the 22 local workforce development boards has at least one representative from an entity receiving Title II and/or matching state adult basic and family literacy funds. Staff from adult basic education programs also serve on board committees and subcommittees for administration, programing, youth, and career pathways, among others. In addition to Title II representation on the local boards, adult basic education providers regularly report to local boards on their programs, partnerships, and successes of students, particularly attainment of credentials, employment, and transition to postsecondary education and training.

4. **Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) Program** (AEFLA Section 243)

PDE held a Title II-compliant competition in early 2018 for section 243 funds for two-year grants awarded effective July 1, 2018. Section 243 funds were competed separately from basic grant funds. As part of the grant proposal, applicants had to provide evidence of the need in the local area for a section 243 program and its related integrated education and training (IET) activity,

including relevant communications with the local workforce board, local employers, other workforce partners, and social service agencies serving the target population. In addition, the application included a section with six items in which applicants had to describe how the activities proposed in the grant aligned with various aspects of the local plan, including workforce needs and career pathways.

Twelve eligible providers submitted applications; seven of those were awarded grants totaling $1,356,845. Successful section 243 IELCE grantees were required to provide:

- Year-round IELCE classroom activities and support services, including during the summer.
- At least one IET activity.
- IELCE instruction that supports program participants to transition successfully to the IET and to earn a high school equivalency credential, if needed, as part of the training activity.
- Support services to help students identify education and career goals, develop employability skills, and successfully participate in and complete postsecondary education/training and gain employment.
- Integration of workforce preparation activities into instruction and support services.
- A plan for ensuring student access to grant activities, including to the IET activity.
- One-stop partnership and fulfillment of the roles and responsibilities of a one-stop partner.
- Partnership with a training provider to deliver the training portion of the IET activity.

After the results of the competition were announced, grantees were required to submit graphic organizers detailing the content of their IELCE and IET activities as part of the grant contract approval process. Once the graphic organizers were approved by the division for compliance purposes, PDS staff reviewed them to inform the professional development and targeted technical assistance provided to section 243 grantees during 2018-19. This required professional development was similar to the instruction institutes described in the leadership section: it began and ended with a face-to-face workshop and had coaching and webinars in between. In addition, the Workforce Project staff and other PDS staff spent time at programs individually, providing specific, targeted technical assistance for all components of the IELCE programs. The technical assistance focused on recruiting and communicating expectations to prospective students; writing IELCE curriculum maps; determining when students are ready to transition into the IET, and the design and delivery of the IET activity.

All grantees had to submit an *Integrated Education and Training Proposal* to have their IETs approved by division staff before offering them. The *Integrated Education and Training Proposal* requires programs to establish the single set of learning objectives for the IET activity. Then, the content of each component of the IET is explained, including the related *College and Career Readiness Standards* for the adult education component, the *Foundation Skills Framework* competencies for the workforce preparation activities, and the training objectives for the occupational training component. Two of the grantees had IETs that were approved during 2017-18 and were able to offer the first IET session early in the program year. All other grantees were required to have the IET approved by December 31, 2018 in order to continue receiving grant funds without restriction for the remainder of the program year. All grantees met that deadline.

In spring 2019, division staff visited all section 243 grantees and observed full class sessions of both IELCE and IET activities. Based on these observations, the division determined that integration of components is a challenge for all grantees, especially in the IET activities. Adult education activities were generally in the context of the occupation, but the occupational training

rarely integrated the adult education content in a focused, transparent way that reinforced development of the relevant skills. In fact, the trainers appeared not to have made any adjustments to the training curriculum for the section 243 program. Section 243 grantees have learned that they must find trainers that understand the purpose and goals of the IET and are willing to learn from their adult education colleagues on how best to work with this specific population. Also, occupational training with strict requirements, such as Certified Nursing Assistant training, may not be appropriate for an IET due to the training providers' limited ability to adjust the curriculum.

Another challenge identified by the programs is providing an adult education component of the IET that is of sufficient quality and intensity to improve students' academic and communication skills to the level needed to succeed not only in the training but also in any required certification exams and in any resulting employment. Both teachers and students commented that many students who completed the IET nonetheless struggled to pass the exams necessary to become certified and to communicate with colleagues and clients at the workplace. Professional development for section 243 grantees in 2019-20 is designed to improve integration of components and support quality adult education.

All of the grantees underestimated the amount of planning time necessary for both the IELCE and IET activities, which compounded the lack of integration of components. This was especially true for the IETs. Programs realized that the adult education teachers and the trainers must meet regularly, ideally several times a week, in an ongoing cycle of preparing, reviewing, and revising lesson plans. The division worked with the programs to provide the resources necessary to have better planning in the second year of the grant cycle.

Despite the many challenges, section 243 grantees are committed to making the programs succeed. They are building on lessons learned to improve their existing IETs and to develop new ones.

5. Adult Education Standards

The Pennsylvania State Board of Education adopted the Pennsylvania Core Standards in November 2013. The standards went into effect March 1, 2014. PDE's Division of Adult Education began formal statewide implementation of the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education (CCRS) during 2014–15. Prior to implementation of the CCRS, Division of Adult Education staff completed a crosswalk of the CCRS to the Pennsylvania Core Standards. All items included in the CCRS are also in the Pennsylvania Core Standards; in many cases, the wording of the standards is identical.

Implementation of the CCRS has been greatly enhanced by Pennsylvania's participation in the College and Career Readiness-Standards-in-Action (CCR-SIA) technical assistance project. Following the CCR-SIA process, teams from local programs initially focused on understanding the standards through the unpacking process. Next, teams focused on lesson revision, resource alignment, evaluation of student work to determine the quality of assignments, and on the observation/program evaluation process. In 2018-19, many programs continued to work in their professional learning communities to increase standards implementation at their programs by creating standards-based lessons, using the lessons in the classroom, and then returning to the professional learning communities to revise the lessons. Some programs also worked on observation and aggregation of data, the final step in the original CCRS-SIA process. The PDS offered professional development in a hybrid format that combined a one-day face-to face workshop with ongoing coaching and webinars throughout the year.

The process of implementing the standards statewide began with a team attending the CCRS Implementation Institute in Washington, D.C., in June 2014. The PDS then used the CCR-SIA process and the materials from the institute to create a two-day summer institute in August 2014 that introduced the instructional advances and started the process of understanding the standards by unpacking, creating activities, and aligning resources. The division required each funded program to send a team comprised of the administrator, the in-house professional development specialist, and at least two teachers. Program staff completed hands-on activities and left the institute with an outline of their annual program improvement/professional development worksheet.

Since early 2015, implementation of the standards has been led by the team that represented Pennsylvania in the CCR-SIA technical assistance project. Team members attended CCR-SIA workshops held in Washington, D.C. and then returned to their local programs to pilot the techniques and activities they learned. The experience and knowledge gleaned during their pilots informed the statewide rollout of the standards-based initiative.

The first workshop the pilot team attended focused on lesson revision, alignment of resources, and completing the lesson study process. Based on their experiences using the materials at their local programs, pilot team members developed and presented the content for the 2015 Summer Institute in August 2015. Teams from each funded program learned the processes and then returned to their agencies to build capacity to complete this work. The CCRS implementation work formed the basis of the program improvement/professional development activities for the year, as it had in the prior year.

The second workshop focused on student work protocol and observation and aggregation of data to assess use of standards. Team members piloted the activities learned there and then developed the content for regional trainings on the student work protocol that were held in 2016-17. Pilot team members also trained practitioners at other agencies to expand capacity across the state. In 2015-16, there were 50 coaches trained to work with the CCRS protocols. These coaches continued to provide leadership for CCRS implementation at their own agencies and assisted at several face-to-face CCRS trainings in 2016-17. To sustain standards implementation for 2018-19 and beyond, the team now provides customized coaching at the program level.

The success of CCRS implementation has been supported by structures and systems that the division has put in place since 2011. The PDS includes consultants who work with program teams to identify program improvement and professional development needs and write action plans. Programs have created internal support structures for managing their own job-embedded professional development efforts, including an in-house professional development specialist, who works closely with program staff to align and support professional development needs and help with implementation of new knowledge and skills. The consultants continue to work with programs in professional learning communities that focus on standards-related work and teachers are now working on using the peer observation process to improve their standards-based lessons. The expanding cadre of teacher coaches in several content areas provides targeted assistance to programs as needs are identified.

The greatest challenges programs have faced implementing the CCRS are the conditions that are common in adult basic education programs: a predominantly part-time workforce with high staff turnover, lack of sufficient protected time for preparation and professional development, and limited funds. In response, the pilot team members, together with the PDS, have converted

the content of the CCRS trainings to online on-demand professional development modules. These modules are on the Pennsylvania Adult Education Resources website and are available to anyone. In addition, the division is using technology to offer training at a distance with additional support from the CCRS coaches. Other challenges include the need for more expertise in math instruction, especially individuals with expertise in math practices, algebraic reasoning, and high school level math, and using the CCRS in ESL instruction. The division is working to increase capacity in both areas. In 2018-19 the PDS offered a yearlong institute that utilized the English Language Proficiency standards to help make the CCRS more accessible to ESL instructors in their standards planning and implementation processes. Plans for PY 2019-20 will address using math standards in the ESL classroom.

6. **Programs for Corrections Education and the Education of Other Institutionalized Individuals** (AEFLA Section 225)

Pennsylvania uses both federal section 225 funds and state Act 143 funds to provide adult basic education services in correctional facilities and other institutions. In 2018-19, 15 grantees and six subgrantees provided adult education and literacy activities in 23 county jails, one state correctional institution, and two work release programs to 771 participants. 207 those participants were reported as having been released from incarceration during the program year.

PDE was not able to calculate a relative rate of recidivism for criminal offenders in corrections education in 2018-19. There is no standardized data collection or reporting on recidivism across counties. Definitions of recidivism vary; the most common definition is a return to the same facility for any reason (i.e., new charges or parole violations) within three years of release.

Of the 23 county jails in which corrections education services were provided in 2018-19, 11 report that they do not calculate recidivism rates. Three county jails calculate recidivism rates only for individuals who participate in specific activities: a reentry program at one jail and mental health programs at the other two. Three county jails stated that they are working on ways to track recidivism rates in the future. In all three cases, the planning for recidivism research is happening as part of the work of re-entry committees and coalitions.

For relative rates of recidivism rates for corrections education participants, only one county jail was able to provide both recidivism rates for the general population and rates for participants in education programs. The jail counts the percentage of the jail population that has entered the facility more than once, regardless of the reason and at any point after initial release. The jail reports an overall recidivism rate of 78.8 percent as of December 2, 2019. Using the same definition, the rate for students served in education programs funded with either county funds or funds through PDE since 2015-16 was 31.9 percent. The rate for individuals who earned a high school equivalency credential was 30.4 percent.

The state correctional system has a process to track recidivism. However, none of the participants in corrections education at the state correctional institution were released during the program year.