

Puerto Rico Department of Education
Adult Education Program 2018-19 NRS Narrative Report
December 26, 2019

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

(a) Describe how the State has used funds made available under section 223 (State Leadership activities) for each of the following required activities:

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

The Puerto Rico Department of Education of Puerto Rico (PRDE) developed during the fiscal year 2018-2019 several strategies to align adult education and literacy activities with the WIOA core programs and one-stop partners. The staff of the Adult Education Program (AEP) participated actively in various working groups with the partner agencies to coordinate services in order to:

- 1) Increase programs integration
- 2) Promote that the population groups identified as the most in-need have easy access to services
- 3) Promote referrals between programs
- 4) Identify the data that should be shared among the programs
- 5) Develop joint efforts to comply with the primary indicators and objectives established in the PR Unified State Plan.

The working groups included one to the negotiation of MOU's, other to evaluate several metrics, and other to coordinate services with the Wagner Peyser program.

The collaborative work relationship developed during 2018-2019 program year includes the renewal of the 16 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the PRDE and the Workforce Development Areas. These MOU's define the roles and responsibilities of each partner to achieve the goals and objectives established by the System. Also, include the negotiated share of payment of the expenses of the One-Stop Centers. The AEP also, developed an additional MOU between the PRDE and the other partner agencies that establish the framework to provide services for employers, employees, the unemployed, and other segments of the population with barriers to obtaining employment. Each one of the AEP seven (7) operations regions has an AEP representative in the corresponding local WIOA boards. As an example of the high-level engagement in local WIOA boards, the AEP central office director participates in one local board and the NRS Reporting Unit coordinator is member of two local boards. Several regional directors participate in other local boards.

The Adult Education Program performed a dissemination effort to encourage that any potential eligible provider meets the requirement to align their services with the needs identified in the local plan of the corresponding workforce development area that will impact the population identified as the most in need of

services in the local plan. As a component of the dissemination efforts the AEP performed an initial meeting to all service providers to discuss the year work plan and another meeting for the kick-off of the activities.

The AEP coordinated and carried out various cross-development activities. The Program guided and received training to and from the management team of the partner agencies, the Local Boards of Labor Development, and the staff working in the One-Stop Centers on topics, such as the services offered by the program, intake / orientation, eligibility screening, referrals between partners, as well as other joint mechanisms developed through agency partnerships.

The AEP appointed four (4) new liaison employees to be located in the One-Stop Centers in order to maximize the integration of services within the WIOA System and the promotion of referrals between programs. During this year, the AEP continued developing activities to promote the model of career pathways in order to provide access to employment and training services for individuals in adult education and literacy activities. Local providers received training and technical assistance on topics related to career pathways. The AEP performed nine (9) workshops on career pathways to an average of 54 counselors assigned to the services providers.

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

The PRDE developed several activities as part of the professional development (PD) effort in order to: (1) identify key present and future PD needs, (2) develop PD plans and resources, (3) identify and implement best practices in PD, (4) coordinate PD activities, and (5) review evaluation data from activities for continuous improvement of an efficient and effective PD system. All the PD activities are aligned to the PRDE ABE PD standards. Evaluation of PD outcomes, especially, evidence of teacher change and quality of implementation of new knowledge and skills was integrated into every initiative to ensure effectiveness of PD activities.

The AEP program supports PD activities that focus on a variety of area of emphasis, including content standards implementation, career pathways, evidence-based reading instruction (EBRI), adult learning, research-based instructional methodologies, effective program management transition to postsecondary education and use of technology, among others.

During FY 2018-2019 several activities were designed to motivate, provide orientation and enrichment of the educational experience of the Adult students. The following list describes the activities:

1. Eight (8) workshops on the topic of andragogy strategies, contextual teaching model, integration of employability skills, how to carry out the planning of the instructional activities, and the fulfillment of the program objectives and the performance indicators.
2. One hundred sixteen (116) visits of mentoring and coaching to teachers in order to explore the implementation of the curriculum in the classroom and the literacy process, the use of evaluation instruments, and identify key areas of improvement. Several workshops on the topic of Career Pathways to local providers and counselors.
3. One (1) workshop on the topic of STEM strategies.

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

The PRDE provided technical assistance to eligible providers as described in section 223(1)(c)

To enhance program effectiveness, increase the ability of providers to meet established performance standards, and fulfill obligations associated with being a one-stop partner, the AEP provided technical assistance to eligible providers. Specific areas of focus during 2018-2019 included:

1. Increasing the capacity of instructors and programs to provide quality instruction in the areas of reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, and English language acquisition.
2. Data reporting and data analysis for program improvement, integration of education with occupational training and career pathways, and transition strategies for post-secondary enrollment or employment, in order to enable them to establish, build upon, or maintain effective relationships with other core providers.
3. The use of technology in improving program effectiveness through training and technical assistance focused on preparing instructors and program administrators when identifying and utilizing technology to enhance instruction.

Training and technical assistance was also focused on the effective use of the Adult Information System(AIS) at AEP which purpose is to maintain accurate student data and continuous improvement in data quality. Training was offered to 183 staff members through 17 workshops, focusing on key issues such as how to gather and save data, data quality validation, data usefulness to demonstrate services effectiveness, performance levels standards negotiated with NRS and follow-up to performance indicators.

The AIS unit continued the use of interactive support tools during the capture and reporting of data. The unit developed new validation and data reporting protocols. Technical assistance was provided through phone calls and electronic mail; A total of 519 issues were attended through the AIS call center. A total of Seven (7) workshops were developed, covering the seven operational regions of the AEP, to guide local providers in the daily operations of the AEP, the public policy that frames the services offered by the program, and on the use of best practices to carry out adult education and literacy activities. The PRDE Office of Professional Development employed a variety of methods in order to ensure that information about proven or promising practices and models were disseminated to eligible providers and practitioners working in the ABE system. Among these methods were: local program site visits, sessions at State and regional workshops showcasing promising practices and models, and job-embedded professional development activities.

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

The PRDE continues to evaluate programs through a desk audit process in which measures such as: average attendance hours, educational functioning level gains, and number of students post-tested, among other are reported and reviewed. The desk audits also allow programs to review their operational aspects such as: percentage of funds expended, completion of required professional development, and completed personnel activity reports.

The PRDE's AEP also performs continuous site visits for each adult education and literacy program to ensure that state and federal laws and policies are followed, to review program performance, and maintain linkages with local providers. Based upon the findings during the site visits, regional program executive directors provide technical assistance to service providers program directors and staff to ensure continuous quality improvement.

Additionally, PRDE's AEP Monitoring Unit staff conducts an intensive program review to assess each in the following areas: Program management and reporting, Financials, Professional development, Student intake, Documentation and orientation, Program policies, Instruction, Retention, Collaboration and Facilities. This program review process allows program staff and the PRDE's AEP director to thoroughly assess program operations, observe classroom instruction, and review State and federal laws and policies. Each program review is accompanied by a financial review by the PRDE's AEP Monitoring Unit and Office director staff.

During FY 2018-19 the PRDE's AEP performed several types of Site Monitoring/Systematic Reviews on: Students Records Monitoring, Programming and Fiscal Monitoring, and Equipment and Property Monitoring to the participating educational centers and institutions.

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

The AEP has not used funds for additional permissible activities described in section 223(a)(2).

2. 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.

The AEP overall assessment of the core programs performed as follows:

Adult Education Participants' profile school year 2018-2019

- a) Enrollment distribution by program and gender: The Adult Education Program served, during 2018-2019 school year, an active enrollment of 5,289 participants. The distribution by gender was as follows: 2,731 males and 2,558 females. Students by services was as follows: Basic Education 374 (ABE 1 thru ABE 4), 2,842 Secondary Education (ABE-5 thru ABE-6 and Equivalency Exam Tutoring), 2,073 Conversational English, and 1,068 were served while in the correctional education program or in rehabilitation.
- b) Demographic Characteristics and Participants Status Composition of students by age, during school year 2018--2019, showed that the greatest participation in the program was among students between 25-44 years of age, a total of 1,859 participants which represented 35% of the enrollment. The 16-18 years of age for a total of 1,429 participants make up 27% of the enrollment. The group age of 19-24 represented 15% of the total with 772 participants. Finally, 681 participants in the 45-54 years of age group, representing 13%. These groups represented 90% of the clientele served. The, 99.7% of the participants identified themselves as Hispanics or Latinos.

The employment rate was 21% with 1,104 students employed. The unemployed were 1,351, representing 25% and the not in the labor force were 2,834. Those not in the labor force represented 79% of the total participants served.

c) Nine (9) criteria were used in identifying level of schooling of participants before registering in AEP. Largest frequency was in the 9th-12th grade with no diploma. This group included 2,359 participants, representing this represented 5% for a total of the total participants. The second most important group was the College level, 916 participants representing 17%. The 6th-9th grade was the third group in relative importance, with 664 participants, representing 13%. The fourth group was the secondary school diploma participants, with 554 participants, representing 10%. These four groups represented 83% of the total participants served. The other remaining groups represented the 17%.

Measurable Skill Gain (MSG) achieved.

The Adult Education Program achieved two of three general objectives in skill gains: A total of 2,343 participants achieved at least one functioning level below the post-secondary level and 864 participants achieved the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its equivalent. AEP fulfilled the negotiated performance indicators. The achieved level was 73.89%, a 3.89% over the negotiated goal.

- Quality and effectiveness of the funded eligible providers and any plans to further increase performance in future reporting years.

The Adult Education Program (AEP) implemented a plan to improve quality. The plan was based on a set of 17 workshops related to data gathering quality and performance reporting to the NRS.

3. Integration with One-stop Partners Describe how the State eligible agency, as the entity responsible for meeting one-stop requirements under 34 CFR part 463, subpart J, carries out or delegates its required one-stop roles to eligible providers.

- Describe the applicable career services that are provided in the one-stop system. Describe how infrastructure costs are supported through State and local options.

The Adult Education Program is represented in the State Workforce Investment Board by Dr. Wanda O. Cabrera, Assistant Secretary for Alternative Education, representing the Secretary of Education. During FY 2018-19, there was representation and active participation of the ADP in the local boards. In addition, the PEA appointed four (4) liaison staff members to coordinate services with the one-stop American Job Centers, each one, visiting four job centers on a weekly basis. These liaisons were responsible for dissemination, promotion, and follow-up of all referrals provided by the one-stop- centers/partners from the designated five (5) economic development regions with common market and similar socio-economic characteristics.

The Adult Education Program offers program services dissemination, eligibility requirements, as well as participant's placement according to performance level. Also, career awareness and planning, career pathways orientation, reading, and math instructional strategies are provided.

During FY 2018-19, the PRDE negotiated infrastructure costs with each one of the Local Workforce Development Boards and signed 16 Memorandum of Understanding which were effective as of October 1, 2018, defining the roles and responsibilities to achieve the strategic goals and objectives established by the System, including the payment of the expenses of the One-Stop centers.

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

Describe how the state is using funds under Section 243 to support the following activities under the IELCE program:

- *Describe when your State held a competition (the latest competition) for IELCE program funds and the number of grants awarded by your State to support IELCE programs.*

PRDE held the latest competition Fiscal Year 2018-19 for a period of one (1) year, which will extend up to 2019. The awards to service providers are in hold, pending the new funding release as per USDE decision to appoint a third-party administrator for the PEDE federal funding.

- *Describe your State efforts in meeting the requirement to provide IELCE services in combination with integrated education and training activities.*

During FY 2018-19, PRDE had a limitation to offer IELCE services in combination with integrated education and training (IET) activities. Nevertheless, the program performed four (4) RFP competencies to reach for service providers, specifically, one for IELCE/ET services, but any provider submitted a proposal for these services.

- *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 programs goals.*

PRDE is including in the 2020 – 2014 Unified Plan a series of activities for IELCE, including a new career pathways operational plan place IELCE program participants in unsubsidized employment of in-demand industries and occupations.

- *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.*

The PRDE is involved in an improvement effort to ensure that IELCE program activities are integrated with the local workforce development system participant placement according to performance levels.

5. Adult Education Standards

- *If your State has adopted new challenging K-12 standards under title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended, describe how your Adult Education content standards are aligned with those K-12 standards.*

Since 2008, the Adult Education Program of the PRDE has been engaged in a periodic curricular review process to enhance and update the educational practices associated with adult learning. The implementation of the new curriculum began in August 2012, with the official authorization by the Secretary of Education. A new curriculum review is in the planning stage and the review process, depending on funding, will start during the program year 2020-2021. The PRDE and the Adult Education Program are committed in the implementation of the new curriculum. The AEP program content standards for adult education are fully aligned with the PRDE academic content standards. The Adult Education program's content standards were developed in accordance with the Common Core federal program and PRDE's content standards.

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

- What was the relative rate of recidivism for criminal offenders served? Please describe the methods and factors used in calculating the rate for this reporting period.

The recidivism rate was relatively low with a total of 1,068 criminal offenders served. A total of 472 achieved gains, representing 44%. There were 68 recidivists which represent a 6% of the total served.

The PRED used data provided by the PR Department of Correction and Rehabilitation generated by their own statistical procedures and The Puerto Rico Penal Code Law #146 of June 30, 2012 as amended.

End of this report