



STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF ADULT EDUCATION
220 French Landing Drive
Nashville, Tennessee

Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Adult Education Division
Narrative Report Program Year 2018-19

1. State Leadership Funds

- a. Describe how the State has used funds made available under section 223 for each of the following required activities
 - i. Alignment of adult education and literacy activities with other one-stop required partners to implement the strategies in the Unified or Combined State Plan as described in section 223(1)(a)
 - ii. Establishment or operation of a high quality professional development program as described in section 223(1)(b)
 - iii. Provision of technical assistance to funded eligible providers as described in section 223(1)(c)
 - iv. Monitoring and evaluation of the quality and improvement of adult education activities as described in section 223(1)(d)
- b. As applicable, describe how the State has used funds for additional permissible activities described in section 223(a)(2)

I. Working within the framework of WIOA, Tennessee Adult Education works to provide services in collaboration and coordination with our State Plan. Ensuring local collaboration, adult education is represented on the local workforce boards within local areas. Basing the development of local plans on the State Plan,

providers are responsible for providing adult education and literacy activities under WIOA.

Leadership funds have been used for education and training of staff in core focus areas like reentry, collaboration with youth, and employer engagement. Trainings that took place, leveraged partners and partner information, helping inform provider leadership of resources that benefit participants. A specific example is information provided on the Business Services Unit. With a stronger focus on employer engagement and their need for an educated workforce, Adult Education has encouraged providers to start partnering with employers. To efficiently do this, the providers should leverage the Business Services Unit, which informs employers of services that can be provided through the Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The focus on employer engagement is joined by a focus on improving transition services to post-secondary education and training. Information concerning partner and employer collaboration was regularly discussed during leadership trainings.

Continuing to strengthen the collaboration expected within WIOA, leadership funds were utilized to support the data management system for fluid coenrollment and resource sharing with workforce partners. Jobs4TN is the system utilized by Titles I-III, with connection to Unemployment Insurance and employers. The ability to aggregate data within Jobs4TN is assistive in collecting and reporting information, as well as identifying needs and eligibility of participants.

In support of the operation of Jobs4TN, leadership funds were utilized for training and technical assistance to providers. To ensure the proper utilization of Jobs4TN, NRS reporting, and Assessment Policy implementation Adult education executed trainings, webinars, and technical assistance with providers.

- II. Each year Adult Education conducts professional development utilizing different formats. The primary event that is conducted each year is the Academy for Instructional Excellence. Encouraging the implementation of WIOA and its different facets, the Academy brings adult education providers together from across the State. Focusing on standards for instruction, compliance, and workforce partners, providers learn about the nuances of adult education and the workforce system.

Another form of professional development opportunity funds are utilized for is Leadership trainings. Trainings focus on keeping leadership of local programs informed of Federal and State priorities. Workforce partners are invited to attend

and educate adult education staff and provider leadership on services possibly available to our participants. These trainings are effective and allow providers time to come together and share best practices.

To supplement the Academy and regional trainings, webinars are conducted when the need arises, as well as instructional videos, and providing support materials for local staff to access as needed. Regional trainings also take place for instructors as well as support staff in order to train on best practices, College and Career Readiness standards, and NRS requirements.

- III. With the responsibility of the Division of Adult Education to operate as the pass through entity for the U.S. Department of Education funds and directives, State staff operates as consultants to providers, providing regulation guidance and funding. State staff operates in various compliance and support capacities including: monitoring, technical assistance, and data review.

The major task conducted by members of the State staff is monitoring. Each year a risk assessment is conducted on providers to determine which programs should be monitored. Monitoring consist of onsite visits by State staff who then review programmatic and fiscal processes, and the practices of the local staff, as well as active classrooms. Once monitoring is completed, State staff members involved with the monitoring visit compile the information and issue findings and recommendations to the provider. Staff members then work with providers on corrective actions and improving program operations. This process has improved provider practices and attention to processes since it has been implemented.

Another task executed by staff is technical assistance. Staff members operate as consultants with local providers when a question, concern, or need arises. Providers can leverage the State staff by requesting technical assistance for any program barriers that they encounter. In the event that technical assistance is not requested, State staff still stays in communication with providers concerning needs and performance. The technical assistance can be in the form of on-site visits, phone calls, or webinars.

Technical assistance is also provided for data entry and management. Our Director of Performance stays in constant communication with support staff to oversee the proper execution and upkeep of data. Communication takes the form of phone calls, emails, and monitoring. Program staff is able to report issues with reports to the State office, at which time the data management system is reviewed and corrected. Part of this process is includes regular review of reports for

discrepancies in columns, followed by review of individual data elements and corrections if needed.

- IV. The Director of Performance conducted monitoring visits of providers to ensure compliance. Four (4) monitoring visits took place in 2018/19.

Monitoring visits consist of reviewing the operations of the providers, performance, file upkeep, and data entry. Tennessee Adult Education is partnered with the Performance Accountability Review (PAR) team for fiscal review, which is part of Internal Audit of Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development. Having PAR conduct a fiscal review process creates an independent review team for fiscal procedures.

Once a monitoring visit is completed a report is created for both, the programmatic and fiscal review, then combined and returned to providers for the creation of a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) if findings are made. The consultants then work with the providers to complete the CAP and improve operations.

2. Performance Data Analysis

- a. **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.**

- I. During program year 18/19 Tennessee Adult Education had a negotiated rate of 38% measurable skill gains (MSG) with OCTAE. MSG is the only negotiated target for Adult Education out of the core indicators of performance at this time. While MSG is the only negotiated measure, Tennessee has collected data on the other core measures concerning employment, post-secondary, and certifications.

During program year 18/19 adult education providers hit a rate of 37.87% MSG. There has been an improvement in MSGs in terms of post-testing from the 17/18 data to 18/19 (1,049 vs. 1,306). While this is fewer than desired, State staff consistently work with providers on creating a pipeline of participants via the educational functioning levels. While MSGs through post-testing improved, MSGs through diplomas decreased. The decrease was expected due to changes in partnerships.

While MSG was the only negotiated metric, data was still expected to be reported for employment and post-secondary outcomes. The analysis of available data for the core

outcome measures stresses an employment focus for WIOA, not purely academic and it is represented in the metrics below:

- Employment Second Quarter after Exit: 44.42%
- Employment Fourth Quarter after Exit: 43.58%
- Attained Secondary School Diploma/Equivalent and Enrolled in Postsecondary Education or Training within one year of exit: 0.55%
- Attained Secondary School Diploma/Equivalent and Employed within one year of exit: 35.35%
- Attained a Postsecondary Credential while enrolled or within one year of exit: 0%

Providers are engaged with workforce partners to identify processes for better interaction and collaboration with individual participants. As relationships and connections improve amongst partners, outcome measures will improve. The changes made are expected to lead to greater retention, greater engagement, and relevant instruction to individual participants.

Additionally, best resources and practices are recommended to the providers to help improve services for participants. The strategy is to provide proven resources that can be selected for the differing needs within the local areas.

3. Integration with One-stop Partners

- a. 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.**

- I. One-Stop Partnerships are established by the local providers of regions containing comprehensive American Job Centers (Comprehensive Centers). Providers of adult education services are selected through the competitive bid process, and work in collaboration with the State to negotiate infrastructure funding agreements when determining needs.**

Adult Education is represented within the local areas across the State. During the local planning period, Adult Education is to be involved with the planning and need assessment within the local area. The involvement of Adult Education during this planning process details what services are to be rendered by which partner, and the priorities of services.

The local provider(s) of services will be able to negotiate based on what is needed on a local level. With determining needs, different services can be catered to the different regional needs. Some of the career services that are carried out in the Comprehensive Centers include phone and internet access, job application workspace, automated Labor Market information, technical assistance in navigating Jobs4TN, meaningful Unemployment Insurance assistance, workshops, job placement, recruitment and training referral services. Services take place in Comprehensive Centers and affiliates.

In counties where Comprehensive Centers exist, the local provider is expected to establish a presence or direct linkage to the Comprehensive Center. Depending on the local area and adult education providers, the negotiating contributions to infrastructure can vary. Negotiations can include the State to assist with identifying reasonable costs. Some providers are able to negotiate within the allocated grant amount allotted, while others may require assistance, either during negotiations or meeting costs expectations.

Infrastructure costs are negotiated with one-stop partners on the local level. Funding for the infrastructure costs of the Comprehensive Centers is a combination of partner funding and services that is contributed for the rental and upkeep of the site. The benefit each partner contributes to the colocation is also taken into account. Based on contributing factors, such as participant traffic attracted by a partner, the costs can be adjusted. Based on these elements, costs are negotiated for the infrastructure of the Comprehensive Centers and applied to partners based on overall contribution.

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

- a. Describe how the state is using funds under Section 243 to support the following activities under the IELCE program:**
 - i. 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.**
 - ii. Describe your State efforts in meeting the requirement to provide IELCE services in combination with integrated education and training activities;**
 - iii. Describe how the State is progressing towards program goals of preparing and placing IELCE program participants in unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to**

economic self-sufficiency as described in section 243(c)(1) and discuss any performance results, challenges, and lessons learned from implementing those program goals; and

- iv. 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.**

- I. When conducting the competitions it has become challenging to find providers interested in writing for the grant. In the most recent series of competitions for IELCE for the 18/19 program year four grant contracts were awarded. The competitive bid process was established for regions within the State that had the highest population of individuals with immigration status based on The Bureau of Labor Statistics. The areas that were awarded contracts include Davidson County, Shelby County, Bedford County, and Hamilton County.

There is a contract for each of the counties mentioned above, equaling four (4) grant contracts total for IELCE services. The competition process consisted of sending out notice to education entities that may have an interest in providing services allowable under the WIOA, and posting the notice on the Department of Labor and Workforce Development's website. Once a period of time passed, allowing for applications to be written and returned to the State, the applications were graded and the grants awarded.

- II. Providers of IELCE services have worked to incorporate IETs into their service model, but have not met the functioning definition of IET. Local providers have collaborated with employers, as well as implemented workforce preparation activities within their services. But it was determined during an OCTAE monitoring visit that the services being defined as IETs did not meet all requirements.

The State has begun educating providers on what an authentic IET incorporates. Since the monitoring and issued findings for not meeting the IET requirement in IELCE, Tennessee Adult Education has begun working with providers to identify opportunities for IET in their local areas. While the providers are developing IETs they continue to carry out the workforce preparation activities originally thought to be IETs. The workforce preparation activities carried out are in connection with employers to enhance employees' communication specifically for the jobs that they are performing.

With the services provided through IELCE the intent is to provide skills valuable in the job market that will help with employment or postsecondary enrollment.

- III. With the requirement of integrated education and training the intent is that the instruction provided is preparing the participants for employment. As mentioned above, programs are working directly with employers or the entity has a job placement program, which is required for participants in their several programs.

Providers of services are improving on referrals and job placement with employers. This has not become a formalized process with some providers, but relationships and connections with employers are being created and strengthened.

- IV. Entities applying for the grants have to provide a letter from the local board showing that they have made their application available to the local board as part of application requirements. Getting a letter from the board ensures that the entity applying has a line of communication with the local board and gives notice to the board of the plan and intent of the applicant. Two (2) of the grants held within Tennessee are held by entities that also receive Adult Education grants. With those entities services of Adult Education can be leveraged to further assist IELCE participants. Leveraging services will allow for deeper services for workforce preparedness, connection to the comprehensive centers and related services, and heightened education past literacy.

5. Adult Education Standards

- a. **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.**

- I. The State K-12 standards are that of College and Career Readiness. Adult Education is strongly aligned with the College and Career Readiness standards and implements them with subrecipients.

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

- a. 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.**
- I. Tennessee does not currently have a method for tracking the recidivism rate for individuals in Adult Education. Though there is not current method, new initiatives in corrections education across State Departments, access to data is improving and will be achievable in the near future.