

KANSAS NARRATIVE REPORT PY 19

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 the following required activities:

- *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).*

The Annual Workforce Innovation Conference continues to be a success and brings together all core Title programs with career technical education from the state's public community and technical colleges. The conference is co-sponsored by the Kansas Board of Regents and the Kansas Department of Commerce. Content is designed to foster collaboration amongst all stakeholders and work towards optimal service delivery across the state and provided a wide variety of professional development for all WIOA partners.

The Perkins V legislation requires a comprehensive local needs assessment that is coordinated by a stakeholder team. This collaboration has proven fruitful as the stakeholder and regional needs assessment teams meet regularly and include adult education and workforce representation.

Career pathways efforts continue to expand in Kansas as additional employer partnerships are developed. This expansion has included services at the Tyson plants as well as an initiative called "Accelerating Opportunity – Kansas @ Work" which is funded by Walmart, Inc. Adult education and career training services are provided at the workplace, and although slowed by the pandemic, these programs are restarting and continuing to provide student learning and career advancement opportunities. One of the largest local workforce areas has been heavily involved with the partnership to provide onsite adult education services at the largest health care system in the region.

Many adult education providers participate in the Integrating Academics with CTE initiative. This project brings adult education together with CTE programs to provide contextualized academic instruction. This collaboration and broadened knowledge about CTE and career pathways have provided an opportunity for more adult education students to enroll in postsecondary education ultimately gaining certificates, degrees, and industry-recognized credentials.

The Core WIOA partners have placed an emphasis on the continued enhancement of cross-Title referrals and collaboration with the new WIOA state plan implementation. Progress has been made on referrals in Kansas's local areas, and we look forward to continuing that trend. The process has highlighted areas for continued improvement and development that will positively impact the delivery of all Title services throughout the state. In addition, KBOR has contracted to provide virtual career pathway training in PY20. This virtual training will be highly beneficial as it will be accessible to all program staff on demand.

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

State staff continue to provide high quality professional development opportunities to local adult education staff. In addition to allocating funds to each program, local programs may submit an application for additional funds to support professional development activities. In this manner, state staff can be sure that activities support individual local program efforts and reduce replication of activities that the state may provide. State staff also provide College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS), STudent Achievement in Reading (STAR), mental health, team teacher, and data quality trainings. Additionally, programs are encouraged, and sometimes incentivized, to participate in national conferences and trainings, as well as online offerings through LINCS, Workforce GPS, and World Ed. Over the last year, state staff dedicated to professional development have begun highlighting and encouraging local program staff to take advantage of the very valuable LINCS trainings.

Prior to moving to a completely virtual environment, state staff had begun to provide hybrid professional development to have a broader effect on local instructional and administrative staff. One such effort is the development and statewide launch of the online CCRS training, which was piloted to select programs in PY18 and resulted in 219 faculty and staff participating in the training. This virtual training expanded in PY19 to a total of 617 modules completed. Kansas adult education requires that all new faculty will have completed the Overview and either the ELA modules (I – III) and/or Math modules (I – III) within the first six months of hire. A weekly feedback loop regarding the training has revealed that faculty are using the training to impact their classrooms by enhancing lesson plan development.

A new contract is being developed with Wichita State University (the learning management system host for CCRS) during PY20 to continue services as well as adding a resource repository to promote instructional collaboration and resource sharing. It will also be tied to the online courses being developed by an adult education content matter expert and will focus on instructional theory and implementation of practice to be launched in PY20. These virtual courses will provide an overview of teaching theory and best practices for classroom implementation. Participants will be required to create a capstone unit which will demonstrate successful completion of theory and CCRS standards. These new courses will be correlated to the implementation of standards-based instruction in the adult education classroom, thus building engagement and development of a body of standards-based instructional material to be shared statewide.

In order to assist in making the shift to a virtual environment, Burlington English and Aztec provided webinars and met individually with program staff to discuss innovative solutions. As a result, statewide access to Aztec was provided and access to Burlington English software was provided as needed by each program. Both vendors scheduled a number of technical assistance trainings/webinars on implementation to ensure maximum use and student success. These tools have assisted programs in rethinking instructional delivery and expansion of services to more students. State staff will continue to provide professional development and technical assistance to continue this positive trend.

(Note: KBOR has an adult education staff member who dedicates approximately 95% of his time to statewide professional development initiatives. In March 2020, he was called to duty by the Joint Operations Center to coordinate a statewide COVID response. He eventually deployed late June and is set to return spring 2021. Staff time has been reallocated to continue professional development support and expansion as noted in this report, and we look forward to his return.)

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

The annual adult education directors meeting is held late summer and has proven to be very successful in disseminating a wealth of information. In addition, this event provides the foundation for further virtual and live events throughout the program year. Content at this annual meeting includes new program requirements, data quality workshops, toolkits, curriculum, and best practices. Technical assistance is provided through scheduled monthly webinars which have proven even more valuable as the mode of delivery pivoted to virtual. These monthly webinars provide a foundation to determine additional technical assistance that may be needed. The annual Kansas Adult Education Conference is held each spring, and while cancelled in 2020, will continue in a virtual format in 2021. The event features a one-day pre-conference program leaders meeting where content closely mirrors the annual summer meeting. Each year, KBOR provides a minimum of four data quality (Adult Education Student Information System - AESIS) trainings, with additional trainings delivered at the request of local programs. This ensures that local program staff are up to date on all WIOA requirements and have implemented local processes to gather and input local-level data into the state data system. These trainings are recorded and posted on the adult education resources webpage to provide access to all program staff as needed.

A mentoring program is provided for new local directors, those who may be returning to the field following an absence, or those who may need additional 1:1 assistance. This program has proven very successful and is designed to provide a common and friendly colleague in the field. State staff match the participants with a veteran program director to serve as a mentor, and meetings are held to launch the program and subsequently to share best practices and touch base calls throughout the year. Mentors and mentees typically arrange monthly meetings, at a minimum, but many times meet much more frequently.

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

Over the last few years, KBOR has developed a robust set of desk-monitoring tools and processes designed to evaluate program quality and identify best practices and areas for improvement. KBOR utilizes a risk-based monitoring approach that drives the nature of technical assistance. This risk-based approach ensures that appropriate technical assistance is provided to improve instruction, program and fiscal management, data quality, and student success, etc. Technical assistance may take the form of an on-site visit, desk audits, monthly meetings, additional reporting, follow-up visits, and further intensive TA.

This monitoring process continues but has been adapted to a completely virtual environment. The desk audit portion of the process had been completed with on-site visits scheduled that had to be cancelled due to travel restrictions. However, these monitoring visits are finalized, and the monitoring process has been completely converted and administered virtually. Regardless of travel restrictions, KBOR is continuing its risk-based monitoring processes and various types of technical assistance, ensuring local compliance with all state and federal guidelines and maximizing student and program success.

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

N/A

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.

100% of all adult education programs converted instruction to a distance learning environment in spring 2020. Programs continued education and support services to students even as enrollment significantly decreased. They also devised methods to continue instruction as students were brought back to the classroom and COVID cases have occasionally taken instructional and administrative staff out of the classroom. Through the various initiatives to serve students at the workplace, several programs had reached their total enrollment number from the previous year by end of the 2nd quarter. Partnerships through the Walmart grant (Accelerating Opportunity – Kansas @ Work) where services were provided at eleven businesses, serving students at the Tyson plants, and providing adult education classes at the University of Kansas Hospital System (UKHS) had programs poised for a highly successful year. UKHS had scheduled their first graduation and diploma celebration which had to be cancelled.

At the end of the second quarter in PY19, Kansas was projecting to end the PY with the first student enrollment increase in three years. Year over year, enrollment was at 4,394 compared with 4,154 the previous year. Local programs were reporting increased demand for services and were looking at adding additional instructional staff to meet the need.

Given the pandemic, instead of an increase in enrollment, Kansas ended the year 5.79% lower than PY2018. In spite of the difficulties presented by COVID with recruiting students, Kansas adult education programs continued to serve their current students well, with 61.09% of students achieving an MSG.

Kansas will continue to make new data reports available to local programs, so that they can be aware of and monitor their performance and can make adjustments as needed throughout the year. KBOR staff also monitor performance throughout the year, and offer technical assistance,

monitoring, and professional development to ensure that all programs have the tools they need to succeed.

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.

As the entity responsible for meeting one-stop requirements under 34 CFR part 463, subpart J, the Kansas Board of Regents has delegated many of its required one-stop role to the local providers in each area. Given the geographic diversity of our state, which is mirrored in the makeup of our workforce regions, KBOR feels that negotiations between local programs and local boards will result in the best possible service for participants across the state. As such, each local program has negotiated an MOU with their local board that includes IFAs under the local funding model. Many adult education providers collaborate with other WIOA partners as a part of the Perkins V Needs Assessment process. This collaboration has yielded additional partnerships such as our Integrating Academics with CTE initiative. This project brings adult education together with CTE programs to provide contextualized academic instruction. This collaboration and broadened knowledge about CTE and career pathways have provided an opportunity for more adult education students to enroll in postsecondary education.

As established in our state plan, adult education is providing initial skills assessments, and determining basic skills needs, using TABE 11/12 and TABE CLAS-E. AEFLA programs provide the online assessment, on-site at their locations, or at the one-stop if the partners are not co-located. As mentioned previously, this new ability to provide online services will continue to broaden the reach of adult education for those students who find it a good fit.

Each adult education provider is performing outreach, intake, and orientation services under their MOUs. This is a responsibility that has been applied to all partners under the Kansas combined state plan's "No Wrong Door Approach". Adult education providers do outreach in their communities to attract students and are then required to follow an intake and orientation process prescribed by Kansas's Proficiency Attainment Model (PAM). It is during the intake and orientation process that students are informed of other services available through the one-stop system (including supportive or assistance services available through partner agencies or other community-based organizations). Students are then assessed and screened for eligibility in a partner program. When adult education centers believe a student qualifies for services through a partner program, they are referred to that partner, even if they do not qualify for adult education services. When students are referred, information is passed to the partner agency to prevent duplication of effort when gathering demographic and assessment information. Adult education centers then work in tandem with their partners to provide collaborative case management, where possible. These processes remain in place during the pandemic but have been converted to virtual services.

Kansas adult education providers are required to provide IET opportunities to their students. Many of these opportunities come in the form of Kansas's Accelerating Opportunity program, which continues to receive state support and grow with the addition of pathways and new providers. These students are co-enrolled in adult and career technical education programs for the purpose of expediting their completion of secondary and postsecondary credentials. During the PY19 program year, KBOR staff worked with local programs to broaden the availability of IET programs in the state's one-stop system. The addition of a number of business partnerships has expanded the opportunities for students to participate in IET. While these programs were suspended for a time during the pandemic, they are expected to continue and grow. State staff continue to work with programs to develop additional partnerships.

Kansas residents continue to benefit from an initiative that was a result of a Workforce Data Quality Initiative grant. Kscareernav.gov provides performance and program cost information on eligible providers of education, training, and workforce services by program and type of provider to participants. It also houses education, training, cost, and employment information for participants based on geographic location (workforce area and county) and provider type. While not a responsibility of the local programs, the Kansas Department of Commerce, the Kansas Board of Regents, the Kansas Department of Labor, and the Kansas Department of Education collaborated to create this dynamic API (web services) site that is updated automatically when there is any change made to the KBOR program inventory database.

4. 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.*

The most recent IELCE competition occurred concurrently with Kansas's section 231 competition. The competition took place between January 2020 and March 2020. Grants were awarded in May 2020, when seven IELCE providers were selected.

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

Kansas IELCE programs continue to build new relationships and partnerships to deliver IET to IELCE students. Although all programs currently deliver IET and IELCE concurrently, several programs have demonstrated successful implementation of ideal IET/IELCE models. These partnerships have also expanded with new initiatives such as the Walmart grant and the Integrating Academics with CTE projects.

- The partnership with Kansas's largest health care system continues to flourish as another group of students graduated in April 2020. This non-native English-speaking

population of students are being provided on-site adult education and training services ultimately being promoted into career pathways at a higher wage in areas vital to hospital operations. There continues to be a waiting list to get into this program.

- One local program developed a partnership with the hotel industry and had 30 students enrolled of which 14 achieved an educational gain and 18 completed the program.
- Another program developed a partnership with a casino that is connected to United Wireless Arena. This partnership had 23 students enrolled with 13 achieving an educational gain and 18 completing the program.
- The Tyson Foods partnership has provided an ideal example of an IET/IELCE model. Tyson promoted the enrollment of their workers into adult education classes provided on-site. In addition to traditional adult basic skills, adult education programs have been providing workforce preparation activities as well as content contextualized to the Tyson environment. The initial program is expanding into a full-fledged IET program that will prepare workers for more specialized occupations within Tyson facilities, with contextualized training carried out in partnership with the adult education program/host community college and Tyson Foods.
- Several local providers collaborated with CTE instructors to develop and deliver contextualized instruction resulting in a higher success rate and lower withdrawal rates.

Students hope to continue their education as businesses allow adult education instructors into the facilities, and employees resume jobs. KBOR will continue providing Technical Assistance to all IELCE providers as we identify best practices.

- *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*

Kansas encourages the development of IELCE/IET career pathways that include employer partnerships. These partnerships have proven to be somewhat of a challenge as programs and employers have dealt with the pandemic, and most of the AO-K programs were on hold at the end of the fiscal year. However, adult education providers have exhibited the ultimate in flexibility working with businesses in an effort to give students opportunities and experiences in the workplace. We continue to advise programs to develop these business partnerships at the onset of program development, and we are seeing many opportunities resurface as businesses have reopened. We do plan to present more about the ability to serve students in the workplace to the executive directors of the local workforce areas as well as the local workforce development boards.

KBOR is working towards expansion of our state's Accelerating Opportunity – Kansas (AO-K) network and seeing additional programs want to be involved. The addition of the Walmart grant

has also proven successful in student success. The programs are typically providing education and training in fields designated as in-demand/high-wage by the Kansas Department of Labor, thus leading to employment in careers paying family-sustaining wages.

- A noted 'Best Practice' is having a dedicated Success Coach/Program Transition Coordinator. This person(s) focuses on students' individual interests and is someone who is knowledgeable of community, educational, and training resources. In addition, they assist students in overcoming barriers to achievement (child-care, transportation, counseling, etc.). This student-centered approach makes a significant difference to students, one student at a time. This was a requirement of the initial AO-K initiative and state staff encourage its continuance due to the higher success rate of students engaged with a Coach/Transition Coordinator.
- A supplemental grant is providing funding to collaborate with business to create virtual work-based learning videos that will be shared with adult education students throughout their program. These videos will focus on high wage/in-demand occupations in Kansas.
- Workforce personnel present information regarding services during each orientation period. These presentations will be developed into a virtual format so as to continue to serve students in this capacity. Various local employers promote the program's courses with some businesses requiring ELA courses (if necessary) while the program receives financial scholarships, incentive pay, and the city provides local transportation. This program has created 12 credit hour career pathways with basic skill instruction aligned with labor market needs that lead to industry-recognized credentials. To help address IELCE 'best practices' across the country, they have utilized LINCS trainings.

KBOR will continue providing Technical Assistance to all IELCE providers as we identify best practices.

- *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.*

Kansas continues to promote integration of IELCE program activities with the local workforce development system by approving IELCE/IET pathways in high-demand/high-wage occupations for each designated workforce area and promoting collaboration between workforce boards and local businesses. Several IELCE grantees have begun forging relationships and carrying out co-enrolled activities. However, these efforts were stunted in PY19 due to the pandemic but are resuming in PY20 with collaboration between workforce boards in two of our largest workforce areas.

Prior to the pandemic a statewide best practice was to invite workforce center to participate in Orientation and continue to have center staff provides updates and interact with students. These practices will continue post-pandemic as they have proven extremely valuable to all.

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.

The State has not adopted new standards, however, in 2013 Kansas adult education adopted the College and Career Readiness Standards which are a subset of the Common Core State Standards utilized by the Kansas Department of Education. Kansas adult education continues to provide professional development and technical assistance meant to ensure the delivery of standards-based instruction to our adult education students. This professional development includes the implementation of our hybrid online CCRS training which is required for all adult education administrators and instructional staff.

In order to further align to the CCRS standards, online courses are in development by an adult education content matter expert to be launched in PY20. These courses will focus on instructional theory and implementation of practice and will provide an overview of teaching theory and best practices for classroom implementation. Participants will be required to create a capstone unit which will demonstrate successful completion of theory and CCRS standards. These new courses will be correlated to the implementation of standards-based instruction in the adult education classroom, thus building engagement and development of a body of standards-based instructional material to be shared statewide.

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.

A list of participants in correctional facilities is maintained using the Kansas AESIS student information system with inmate ID number and earliest possible release date. Students who have passed their release date are compared to information in the Kansas Department of Corrections Offender Database which provides information on student release, supervision status, new charges, and current incarceration status.

The relative rate of recidivism for Kansas is calculated per program year, with student release and reincarceration tracked for a total of three years. Kansas has chosen to define recidivism as the percentage of students who were released and reincarcerated on a new court commitment.

For individuals served in PY 2017, 292 students have released. Of those, 27 have reoffended. This gives Kansas a recidivism rate of 9.25% for PY 2017.

For PY 2018, 167 students have released. Of those, 3 have reoffended. This gives Kansas a recidivism rate of 1.80% for PY 2018.

For PY 2019, 150 students have released. Of those, 3 have reoffended. This gives Kansas a recidivism rate of 2% for PY 2019.