

Section 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:

- 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(a)(1)(A).*

The State has used leadership funds to pay for a portion of a position to work towards alignment of adult education activities with other one-stop required partners to implement the strategies in the combined plan.

In Minnesota, the Department of Education is the provider of Adult Education. The remaining three titles (I, III, and IV) are operated through the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED). The implementation of the plan strategies has been delayed due to significant personnel changes in positions that lead this work at DEED. Over the past year, the directors of Titles I, III and IV programs have all changed over. In addition, the Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards (MAWB) had a change in directors this past year and the Minneapolis Saint Paul Regional Workforce Innovation Network (MSPWIN) and the Greater Metropolitan Workforce Council have both disbanded. These two entities were instrumental in implementing some of the strategies. Many of the new directors were not involved in the original plan or the 2018 revisions. It takes time to build understanding and background knowledge for all parties involved. On top of those changes, COVID had an impact on all activities.

Adult Education looks forward to working with the new directors as they all seem interested and willing to move this work forward. The following activities were led by Adult Education this past program year in an effort to strengthen the alignment between partners:

Regional Transitions Coordination/Regional Transitions Aid

Minnesota has ten Adult Basic Education transitions regions. \$45,000 of federal flow-thru funding is provided to each region as transitions aid. Each region has a single point of contact who facilitates the development of a regional transitions plan. Local Adult Education managers in the region create this plan. The purpose is to help build capacity within the Adult Education field to assist adult education learners in transitioning to employment, postsecondary, or training. Strategies to implement Adult Career Pathways (ACP) and Integrated Education and Training (IET) are a primary focus. This past year the majority of plans included a training for all partners to come together at one regional event and share their programming with the other titles. This was intended to help the frontline staff working in these various programs understand what the other programs do and how to refer learners to each other. These events were planned for the spring of 2020 and, due to COVID, did not happen.

Adult Education and Career and Technical Education

The ABE Transitions Specialist has participated in monthly CTE meetings to assist in developing a “partner-provided” professional development inventory. The purpose is to share professional development opportunities across partners so that we are not duplicating services and saving resources by sharing the resources. An additional committee is working on a “needs assessment” inventory for all partners. The goal is to identify common needs and develop training together across partners.

Adult Education and Developmental Education/Two-year public community college

Adult Education has been supporting the implementation of the [Developmental Education Strategic Roadmap](#). In addition, Adult Education is involved in the [All Learning Counts](#) initiative. The work of this group has helped with moving course placement from an assessment instrument, ACCUPLACER, to guided self-placement during COVID.

Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards (MAWB)

The ABE Transitions Specialist attends monthly Job Seeker Services meetings hosted by the Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards. Each WIOA core program provides an update to the group on current data and programming notes. Each meeting highlights a one-stop partner best practice.

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

State leadership funds were used during 2019-20 to support one Minnesota Department of Education Adult Education position (the professional development specialist) to coordinate statewide professional development (PD) activities and assist local Adult Education program staff in designing and implementing effective PD. In addition, a statewide Adult Education professional development (PD) advisory committee convened quarterly to identify key present and future PD needs, develop PD plans and resources, identify and implement best practices in PD, and coordinate and align PD activities for an efficient and effective PD system. This advisory committee has approximately 25 members, including state Adult Education staff, PD providers and local Adult Education instructors and administrators.

Key PD events and attendance totals for these 2019-20 trainings are listed below:

Professional Development Event	Number of Events	Attendance Totals
Statewide ABE Summer Institute	1 3-day event	473
ABE Foundations for New Adult Ed Staff	2	114
Regional Training Events	3	304
Adult Language and Literacy Institute (ESL and ABE)	1 2-day event	186
ABE Math Institute	1	68
Support Staff Conference	1 2-day event	110
Assessment Trainings	17	309
Trainings for volunteers working in ABE programs	86	2674
ABE Volunteer Management Conference	1	88

In addition to these events, PD was provided through a number of long-term job-embedded activities, including a Content Standards Integration Cohort, a STAR Cohort, a Technology Integration Initiative Cohort, a Technology Leadership Academy, and a Trauma-informed Instruction Study Circle.

When in-person gatherings were prohibited starting in March due to the pandemic, the Minnesota adult education PD system rapidly transitioned to delivering all professional development virtually. From April-June 2020, 15 webinar trainings (1,046 attendees) were held, focusing on a variety of topics to support practitioners in their shift to remote instruction. Some of those topics included: *Maximizing Instructional Time Online*, *Remote Learning for Adult Career Pathways*, *Using Volunteers for Remote Learning*, *Remote Testing* and *Virtual Instruction for Low-level ESL*. All of the webinars were recorded and archived on the MN ABE PD YouTube Channel to ensure they were accessible to those who could not attend the live events. In addition, a series of 14 informal virtual coffee breaks (619 attendees) allowed practitioners to share successes and problem-solve

together with others teaching the same content or working in the same context. Detailed notes of these discussions were taken and shared afterward so that participants or others who could not attend could benefit from the ideas and resources that were shared.

After schools closed, MN ABE PD providers and the state Adult Education office also quickly worked together to establish and facilitate an online *COVID-19 and Distance Education Networking and Resource Hub*, which centralized resources being shared around COVID-19 and its impact on MN adult education programs and facilitated the sharing of questions, resources, and ideas among MN adult education practitioners.

iii) Provision of technical assistance to funded eligible providers as described in section 223(a)(1)(C).

Federal state leadership funds are used to support state-level technical assistance and to provide administrative and professional development services necessary to operate the Adult Education system in Minnesota. Resources helped to provide essential areas of technical assistance, such as: maintaining the Minnesota Adult Basic Education website (www.mnabe.org); providing frequent communication with local program staff through quarterly webinars, fall meetings with Adult Education managers, spring grant application meetings, regional Q and A sessions, and trainings at the annual ABE Summer Institute; providing direct guidance through thousands of individual emails and calls from local program staff; and disseminating a weekly electronic PD newsletter with information about training opportunities, instructional resources and promising practices.

After adult education programs were closed in mid-March due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the MN state Adult Education office intensified its support to local programs and directors through a series of biweekly webinars that provided guidance to the field around the closures, continuity of services, and distance education. These webinars frequently had 150-200 participants and offered attendees the opportunity to ask questions and share strategies and resources with peers. Guidance and information were also provided to local programs through frequently updated written statements and Frequently Asked Questions documents.

Technical assistance also supports funded eligible providers in the following specific ways:

(1) How the State is developing and disseminating instructional and programmatic practices based on the most rigorous or scientifically valid research available in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition programs, distance education, and staff training.

The state is working to increase the capacity of instructors and programs to provide quality instruction in the areas of reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition, and distance education via implementation of PD activities and associated technical assistance such as: support to programs using the STAR model; Evidence-Based Reading Instruction study circles and online courses; annual Language and Literacy Institute; Adult ESL Study Circles; participation in the Minnesota Teachers of Mathematics Conference; MN distance learning website; Distance Learning Basics online course; and online resource libraries in the areas of ACES (academic, career, and employability skills), adult career pathways, CCR standards, Cultural Competency, ESL, numeracy, project-based learning, reading, social studies and civics, and writing. These online resource libraries can be found at <https://atlasabe.org/resources/>.

(2) Fulfilling their role to provide access to employment, education, and training services as required one-stop partners

Minnesota's Adult Education leadership team continues to provide technical assistance to local Adult Education providers in integrating with required one-stop partners. Quarterly, the state team hosts "WebChats" with all providers that include technical assistance on partnering with workforce development (CareerForce). The team also works with required one-stop partners to provide additional technical assistance with WIOA planning and infrastructure funding agreements. In addition, the team works in collaboration with the Minnesota Association

of Workforce Boards (MAWB) to provide specialized training and assistance to each of the ABE representatives that sit on the local workforce boards across the state. The ABE Transitions Specialist oversees the work of the ABE Regional Transitions Coordinators, who provide technical assistance on integration with one-stop partners to local providers at a regional level. She also provides individual technical assistance in this area to programs that request it. Lastly, a Transitions Professional Development Advisory Committee, made up of both state Adult Education staff and local Adult Education staff, advises and supports statewide PD efforts to assist Adult Education providers in integrating with workforce development programs.

(3) Assistance in the use of technology, including for staff training, to eligible providers, especially the use of technology to improve system efficiencies

The Minnesota Department of Education Adult Education office contracted with Literacy Minnesota to provide professional development in the area of educational technology through face-to-face and online training. In addition, online training was provided in a variety of areas, including educational technology, digital literacy instruction, and distance learning. A list of current self-paced courses available can be found at: <https://literacymn.crhosts.cloud/>. Training and technical assistance around distance education and digital literacy is also offered through the same provider. In 2019-20, the MN ABE Technology & Distance Learning Team led 34 training workshops and webinars with 906 participants attending. Trainings focused on a variety of topics, including digital literacy instruction, classroom technology integration, distance learning best practices, and the use of distance learning platforms. In addition, two job-embedded professional development initiatives focused on technology were offered in 2019-20 and were particularly helpful to instructors and programs in their efforts to increase students' access to technology and digital literacy instruction during the pandemic:

- **Technology Integration Initiative Cohort:** Training and support for instructors on integrating digital literacy instruction and technology into lessons
- **Technology Leadership Academy:** Coaching and support for programs around increased technology integration for staff and students

More information about distance learning current training and resources can be found at: <http://www.mnabe-distancelearning.org/>.

In addition, other training and technical assistance focused on the effective use of the statewide data system to maintain accurate student data and continuously improve programming. This support was offered through face-to-face training at conferences and regional events as well as through online synchronous and asynchronous training.

iv) Monitoring and evaluation of the quality and improvement of adult education activities as described in section 223(a)(1)(D).

The state ABE leadership team monitored the quality of adult education activities through the following: ongoing data system development and training to better equip local and state staff to monitor ABE data; review of NRS data; expenditure verification via submission of audit certified expenditure reports; site visits to local ABE programs (in-person and virtual); annual submission of assurances by grantees; implementation of the annual "report card"; and Program Improvement cohort participation for low-performing consortia as identified on the "report card". In addition, accountability training was provided at the following events: support services conference, ABE summer institute, fall and spring "regional" events, statewide local administrator meetings, quarterly webinars, and other events. Additional details can be found online at: <http://www.mnabe.org/accountability-reporting>

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

Volunteer Training and Support: As specified in the Minnesota state plan for Adult Basic Education, the Minnesota Department of Education Adult Education office continues to collaborate with and provide state leadership resources to Literacy Minnesota (www.literacymn.org) to provide literacy volunteer training in Minnesota. That collaboration and support yields a substantial capacity to deliver volunteer tutor training statewide. Literacy Minnesota also supports volunteer tutors through their “Tutor Tip” e-mails and website archive. Most tutors work in settings where their work supports that of a licensed ABE teacher.

In response to the shift to distance learning, this spring Literacy Minnesota developed a series of high-quality, targeted training webinars to improve volunteers' ability to deliver quality instruction remotely. The Foundations of Remote Instruction Certificate Program helps volunteers to develop a solid grasp of the fundamentals of remote tutoring and teaching.

Distance Learning and Digital Literacy: Building Adults' Technology Skills: Leadership resources helped Literacy Minnesota ensure that technical assistance and training was available for programs so they can help Adult Education students access numerous distance learning options through their local ABE sites. Literacy Minnesota also conducted trainings with Adult Education staff to support their integration of digital literacy skill instruction and assessment of students using the Northstar Digital Literacy Standards and Assessments.

Serving Students with Disabilities: Leadership resources supported the delivery of professional development and technical assistance in the arena of serving adults with disabilities and maintenance of a disabilities website: <https://pandamn.org/>. The disabilities service provider also provided training on using Universal Design for Learning principles and strategies to address the varied needs of adult learners.

Section 2: Performance Data Analyses

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.

Minnesota Adult Education Performance Results

WIOA Indicator	FY 2017-2018	FY 2018-2019	FY 2019-2020
Measurable skill gain (MSG)	39.73%	42.56%	36.89%
Employment at second quarter after exit	33.87%	37.59%	37.74%
Employment at fourth quarter after exit	33.44% (partial)	33.54%	36.46%
Median quarterly earnings at second quarter after exit	\$5,583	\$5,660	\$6,070
Credential Attainment	12.4% (partial)	22.88%	13.41%

Minnesota's recent results reflected the low unemployment rate that lasted through early 2020, much lower immigration rates than in recent years and continued low GED prep participation. Key data points for Minnesota Adult Education include:

- Outcomes increased in WIOA indicators for employment and median earnings from 2018-19 to 2019-20.
- Outcomes declined for the Credential Attainment Indicators and for MSG (MSG results were below the target due to COVID-related disruptions, especially in testing).

COVID Impact: COVID has had a major impact on Adult Education in Minnesota. Starting in March 2020, programs began to close in-person programming due to COVID-19. Since then, contact hours have declined by 61%, participant numbers have declined by 25% (more than 8,000 fewer participants), and 11,008 adult education participants were unable to be tested due to COVID-related disruptions. In response, the adult education leadership team has approved remote testing and is working with distance learning specialists to expand countable hours by developing a teacher verification model (TVM).

Analysis and Action: Performance data were reviewed and analyzed by the Adult Education leadership team in meetings and with providers at the Fall ABE Manager Meeting, SPARC (Support Professional Advisory Committee) meetings, and during quarterly meetings with state database staff.

The results are also shared with providers in the state ABE report card and help define program quality expectations in the annual application and 5-year reauthorization processes for state ABE funding. The MSG results and targets are utilized to create benchmarks in the Minnesota ABE Statewide Report Card. This report card is used to identify grantees for participation in Minnesota's ABE Program Improvement Process. (The Program Improvement Policy can be found online at <http://www.mnabe.org/abe-law-policy/mn-abe-policies>.) In 2019-2020, the Minnesota Department of Education identified 14 grantees to participate in a program improvement process, based on local 2018-2019 results. 6 of those grantees went through a more intensive process with site visits and additional reporting requirements.

The Adult Education Leadership Team utilizes state and local performance data to create and adapt professional development offered, especially with WebChats (quarterly webinars for providers), ABE Manager Meetings, database trainings, the Support Services Conference, and other trainings.

Section 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 Minnesota Department of Education, as the state eligible agency, delegated its one-stop responsibilities to 41 Adult Education consortia that had programming at 330 sites across the state prior to COVID. Every year the providers sign an assurance in their grant application that affirms their responsibilities to partner with the one-stop system. Every five years, during the state funding reauthorization process, providers respond to a series of in-depth questions about practices and procedures for integrating with one-stop partners.

Minnesota has 16 [workforce development areas](#) with several Adult Education sites within each area. The majority of Adult Education entities within a workforce area are informed of, and given the opportunity to contribute to the MOU. This process is led by the [ABE representative](#) that is on each local board. The MOUs had to be in place by June 30, 2020. Typically, the MOU would include the IFA, however, due to a federal Department of Labor monitoring visit and subsequent findings, an IFA extension until the end of December was given to Minnesota. Much of the work around the IFA is currently taking place and not yet finalized. The difference between the last IFAs and this round is that Adult Education is being intentional about providing a dollar amount and the rationale on how they came to that dollar amount.

How Adult Education provides access to career services across the state varies and it is often determined by local relationships. Some are co-located and have a staff person on site. There were plans to train partner staff at one-stop centers for those who weren't co-located but many of those trainings, which were meant to be in person to help build relationships, were canceled due to COVID. Another way to provide career services is through a direct linkage through technology to program staff who can provide meaningful information or services. DEED secured a grant to redevelop the CareerForce website and work on this direct linkage. Adult Education and several other partners participated in this redevelopment of the website, and a function is now included in the website that allows messaging from a client directly to a provider or from one provider to another for a client.

Adult Education programs do provide certain career services. Assessment is provided at all Adult Education sites. Also, Adult Education programs do an excellent job of providing outreach, intake, orientation and referrals to support services. Many programs use [Bridge to Benefits](#) to help clients determine what support services they are eligible for. Adult Education programming is listed on the DEED [Career and Education Explorer](#) which includes adult career pathway programming.

In order to facilitate having Adult Education programming listed on CareerForce, the state Adult Education office began requiring local providers to submit a listing of addresses for all programming sites in the annual reporting process. This data was then shared with CareerForce partners and added to the [CareerForce website](#). In addition, these sites were added to the [Career and Education Explorer](#). The Career and Education Explorer is a tool that is available to the public and, sometimes more importantly, CareerForce counselors. Prior to this undertaking, Adult Education site locations had never been integrated into a system that counselors use. Now counselors can pull up all options, for instance in English language acquisition, and view them. The Career and Education Explorer also hosts the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Adult Education programs and their partners can place their adult career pathways on this site as a training option for clients. In addition, Adult Education promoted DEED's purchase of Coursera as an educational tool to help adults gain new skills.

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

- *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 state of Minnesota holds a competition for IELCE program funds every three years. The last year that there was a competition was 2019-2020. [Twelve IELCE grants](#) were awarded. The state has been working with these grantees and the entire Adult Education field to try to implement integrated education and training (IET). In Minnesota, this former civics grant funding traditionally served English language learners at the NRS ESL educational functioning levels of low to intermediate. The difficulty has been in trying to identify training appropriate for learners at those educational functioning levels. The current grantees were offering some form of IET for learners in their program. However, the pandemic has made it extremely difficult to continue to offer the training component. The state is slowly progressing towards placing IELCE program participants in unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that typically are in healthcare. The performance results have been lower than expected but it is difficult to determine the extent to which results have been impacted by COVID-related disruptions. Along with the challenge of offering appropriate training for ESL functioning levels, there is the challenge of trying to ensure that IET has one shared single set of learning objectives. The training provider most Adult Education programs work with is the two-year community college partner. Faculty at the colleges are on different contracts than Adult Education teachers. Because the contracts do not align and “release time” is figured differently in each contract it has become a barrier to having the partners work together. One lesson learned from this is to try to work with other training providers, including employers. All IELCE applications are reviewed by the local workforce development boards and their feedback is taken into consideration when selecting grantees. In addition, each applicant is asked to align their pathway work to the in-demand industry needs in the area. Sometimes there is a pathway that can be developed and sometimes, depending on the industry needs, there isn’t appropriate entry-level training available for ELLs. Whereas COVID has presented a challenge by preventing in-person, hands-on training, it has created an opportunity to offer online training for IET for professionals with degrees and credentials in their home countries. It can be easier to create a cohort online since individuals can be drawn from all over the state, not just one area or community.

Section 5: Adult Education Standards

Minnesota has adopted three sets of content standards for Adult Basic Education (ABE): 1) the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education (CCRS) for English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics; 2) the MN ACES Transitions Integration Framework (TIF) (available at <https://atlasabe.org/key-activities/aces/>) for professional or “soft skills”; and 3) the Northstar Digital Literacy Standards (available at www.digitalliteracyassessment.org) for digital literacy skills.

Minnesota has adopted the English Language Arts Common Core State Standards for K-12. While the Minnesota K-12 Mathematics standards were developed prior to the Common Core and are not due to be revised until 2021-22, it has been determined that they have a strong alignment with the Common Core. The College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education being used for Minnesota ABE are drawn from the Common Core State Standards, and therefore have strong alignment with the Minnesota K-12 standards.

When MN adult education consortia submit documentation for the state funding reauthorization process, they must provide an instructional program description which indicates how each of their courses is aligned to MN ABE content standards. In addition, they must submit a content standards implementation plan and provide evidence of standards integration to date.

CCRS Foundations, introductory six-hour standards workshops providing an overview of the CCR ELA or Math standards and associated instructional shifts, were offered at a variety of statewide conferences, including the August 2019 ABE Summer Institute and the January 2020 Language and Literacy Institute. In addition, practitioners were able to access a CCRS Foundations online course.

A *CCRS Implementation Cohort Training* designed to support implementation of the standards at the local program level is being delivered on a biannual basis. Through a combination of workshops, webinars, online communication, and local implementation activities, program teams participating in the cohort learn to evaluate and improve the CCRS-alignment of lessons, resources, assignments, and instruction. In addition, they develop a multi-year CCRS implementation plan for their program, and provided leadership and training for standards implementation to their colleagues. While the cohort was not offered in 2019-20, cohort alumni continued to receive technical assistance and training to support their standards implementation efforts. In addition, a CCRS Instructional Leadership Summit was held in May 2020 to provide resources and training to those who are providing support around the standards to their colleagues at the program or regional level.

A new *Content Standards Integration Cohort* was developed and delivered this year, offering training and coaching to help ABE instructors build confidence and familiarity with integrating all three sets of MN ABE Content Standards into their curriculum and instruction. Because this cohort took place in the second part of the year, much of work focused on how to effectively and intentionally integrate standards into remote instruction.

Section 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.

According to the Minnesota Department of Corrections (MN DOC), the state's adult prison population was 8,231 offenders as of July 1, 2020. 96.4% were held in state prisons, and the remaining 3.6% resided either in county jails, a state juvenile facility, or other facilities. Of the new admissions during the year (July 2019-June 2020), 26.2% were release returns. In 2018, MN DOC calculated that 74% of offenders do not return to prison (MN DOC 2018 Performance Report).

MN DOC utilizes the federal recidivism rate calculation, based on a three-year follow up period after release from prison. Minnesota's rate of recidivism is 25%, according to MN DOC in the latest data available. In a 2013 study ([The Effects of Minnesota Prison-Based Educational Programming on Recidivism and Employment](#) by Duwe and Clark), obtaining secondary credentials helped offenders enter postsecondary education and gain employment, but diplomas alone were not the primary factor to reduce recidivism. The study found that "obtaining a [diploma] in prison significantly increased the odds of securing post-release employment by 59%." Post-release employment data show that 60% of offenders who earned diplomas in prison found employment within the first two years compared to 50% in the comparison group. The study found that "earning a postsecondary degree in prison... was associated with greater number of hours worked, higher overall wages,

and less recidivism.” Earning a diploma is also critical as a prerequisite to postsecondary education. Obtaining postsecondary credentials in corrections resulted in reduced recidivism, higher numbers of hours worked, and increased wages. Obtaining a postsecondary credential reduced re-arrest by 14%, reconviction by 16%, and new offense re-incarceration by 24%. The employment rate for offenders who earned post-secondary degrees (71%) was slightly higher than that of the prisoners in the comparison group (68%). The study was completed with offenders released in 2007 and 2008, which gives enough time to determine meaningful outcomes post-release. For learners served in corrections systems during this program year, it is difficult to determine recidivism rates as many are still incarcerated and others have been released only recently.

Approximately 22% of people in corrections in Minnesota do not have a secondary credential. In the 2019-20 program year, enrollees in corrections ABE programs generated 624,716 contact hours; 27.13% of correctional students achieved a measurable skill gain.

MN DOC has an education-first policy, which means that individuals who do not have a secondary credential (a high school diploma or high school equivalency diploma) are required to enroll in ABE and achieve a secondary credential through one of three options: GED, high school diploma awarded by a local district, or Minnesota Standard Adult High School Diploma. Once MN DOC individuals complete a secondary credential, they are then eligible for work assignments within the facility and/or to enroll into a post-secondary (career technical, AA or BA) program.

One hundred thirty-three (133) Standard Adult High School Diplomas and 34 credit-based high school diplomas were earned by ABE students in Minnesota correctional facilities from July 2019-June 2020. ABE students in Minnesota’s correctional facilities also performed well on the GED exam, with 252 test-based high school equivalency diplomas issued in 2019-20. The GED passing rate for MN DOC programs was 87%. During the last quarter of the year, ABE programming and assessment was significantly impacted by implementation of COVID-19 restrictions.

Beyond secondary credentials, MN DOC is implementing in-demand career pathway programming for students who have or achieve a diploma to work towards a postsecondary degree or training while still incarcerated. MN DOC’s intensive educational and training programs provide the opportunity for individuals to bridge into postsecondary career pathways options. MN DOC also offers mental health services and other support services to facilitate stability. These policies and strategies promote a robust system of ABE within MN prisons. MN DOC funds their education program with ABE funding and also with supplemental corrections funding.