**Indiana Narrative Report 2020**

In Program Year 2020-2021 (PY 2020), the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (IDWD) was on its way toward continuous improvement through improved student outcomes and a continued focus on innovative models of instruction and effective professional development in the middle of a pandemic. Because of the pandemic, local programs shuttered in-person classes and moved to virtual and other instructional platforms in March 2020.

Slowly, adult education providers reopened doors and welcomed students back into classrooms in PY 2020 while maintaining options for virtual/hybrid learning. Despite COVID, lessons were learned, promising practices were shared, and new opportunities were expanded; however, Indiana’s goal never changed – a vision of adult education programming that leads to successful career pathways, postsecondary transitions, and employment.

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

*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 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(l)(a).*

Since moving from IDOE to IDWD, Indiana Adult Education has worked to align adult education and literacy activities with those provided by the one-stop system. WIOA allowed this work to deepen and expand to include additional partners. The continuing pandemic provided additional incentives to this work.

In the spring of 2018, Governor Eric Holcomb signed Senate Enrolled Act 50 into law. This law moved state workforce board authority from the State Workforce Investment Council (SWIC) to the Governor’s Workforce Cabinet (GWC). The legislation charged the GWC with reviewing each workforce related program. Overall dollars for training of adult education participants was significantly reduced for PY 2019 causing a reduction in the level of co-enrollments between Title 1 and Title II. Leadership acknowledged these funding and enrollment issues and allowed the use of CARES Act funding for training of individuals without a secondary credential when co-enrolled in Title II beginning July 1, 2020.

Alignment work continues around the delivery of employment and training services and development of career pathways using state and federal funding. Career and Technical Education (CTE) was moved from IDOE to the GWC in 2019. New career and technical education courses were added for the 2021-2022 school year. This initiative – Next Level Programs of Study (NLPS) – is designed to improve the consistency, quality, and intentionality of CTE instruction across Indiana. Similarly, the Office of Work Based Learning and Apprenticeships (OWBLA) will also transition to the GWC. As of the workforce system, adult education will continue to partner with both CTE and OWBLA to align Integrated Education and Training (IET) and Workforce Education Initiative (WEI) programming across the education continuum.

Meanwhile, the Virtual Client Engagement (VCE) tool was created in the state agency-wide Microsoft Teams portal and will connect the public virtually with workforce service providers. This system allows for online scheduling of appointments, appointments themselves, document upload and download, and completion of required applications and signatures.

To align, simplify, and streamline how customers, employers, partners, and staff interact with IDWD workforce systems, the agency has undertaken an evaluation of its 10-core systems. This project will be comprised of three primary phases with input from IDWD subject matter expects and regional partners. Phases include a (1) current state analysis; (2) gap analysis; and (3) future vison road map.

IDWD working with Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) has submitted a Request for Proposal to the U.S. Department of Labor to fund a cross-training initiative for staff development at the state, local, and partner levels. The goals for the proposed training include the development of a common definition of co-enrollment and joint case management across partners and staff. Outcomes for this training will be to provide staff with the knowledge and tools they need to operate effectively and operationalizing promising practices in service delivery so that these approaches become the “way of conducting business” throughout Indiana’s workforce system.

Training will be a blend of  virtual and self-paced curriculum built on evidence-based practices that includes both the “why” and “what” of co-enrollment and joint case management and the “how-to” of effective implementation. IDWD and VR will leverage existing Disability and Employment eLearning modules for serving individuals with disabilities to provide a well-rounded experience for newly hired staff and will be a refresher for incumbent staff.

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

Indiana offered high quality professional development in PY 2020 through new and existing initiatives. Adult educators had many online options as well as professional development conferences to fulfill the Indiana requirement of 10 hours of professional development for all instructors teaching over nine hours a week.

A strategic plan for professional development was developed earlier to target and improve measurable skill gains and improve completion rates for PY 2020. The delivery system was driven by the Professional Development Facilitator (PDF) Network as well as state and federal professional development initiatives.

Several activities were representative of a high-quality professional development program as described under State Leadership Activities.

► **Professional Development Staff** – Two full time, state-level adult education coordinators (AECs) were employed to serve as professional development leads representing 12-workforce regions of the state.

The professional development team advanced a strategic plan to target four areas –

(1) Develop a yearly **professional development plan** to target focused instruction for low to mid-level skill gainsin reading, writing, and mathematics integrated with employability and workforce prep skills;

(2) Support a **PDF Network** to further expand local and regional professional development targeting individual program needs based on data analysis;

(3) Designate a professional development lead and AECs to work with struggling and **low performing programs** to increase performance that was aligned more closely to federal and/or state benchmarks; and

(4) Utilize content experts to design and deliver **targeted professional development** in priority areas.

Meanwhile, the professional development team identified underperforming programs using performance data; a systematic approach followed to address gaps. Moreover, the team consulted with PDFs and adult education directors to design and construct **professional development plans** that pinpointed specific PD needs based on NRS Table 4 results.

Even though most all local programs were opened for face-to-face instruction at the beginning of PY 2020, providers continued to struggle with intermittent shutdowns due to COVID outbreaks and sluggish enrollments. Programs continued offering virtual/hybrid options and implemented marketing strategies to attract new students. For the second year, the state office offered a mid-year incentive for programs meeting specific performance metrics. The targets were 52 percent on NRS Table 4, Column I, and 17 percent of ABE adult education enrollments attaining an HSE on NRS Table 4, Column E, by December 31, 2020.

Once again, the mid-year incentive helped to drive strong performance. PY 2020 performance was the strongest year-to-date.

**► PDF Network –** A network of the best-performing instructors in each program (about 30) were recommended and selected for the new program year to coordinate and provide just-in-time training locally and regionally, and to provide professional development planning and mentoring.

To be selected as a PDF, candidates were required to possess adult education teaching experience; demonstrated performance in the adult education classroom on NRS tables 4 and 5; schedule flexibility – approximately five hours a month; and knowledge of career awareness and workforce preparation activities.

Instructors received ongoing training to deliver the highest quality professional development both locally and regionally, all of which were directly tied to federal and/or state performance measures. Candidates who applied were recommended by their supervisor; final selections were made by the state professional team each year. (PDFs in the previous program year must reapply each year.)

Due to the ongoing concerns of social distancing and travel restrictions, no face-to-face trainings were contracted by the state office. Instead, program staff were invited to participate in national and state virtual options.

► **Teaching Skills That Matters (TSTM)** – The TSTM project supports teachers and state professional development staff in meeting the needs of students with a focus on teaching the skills that matter through civics education, digital literacy, financial literacy, health literacy, and workforce preparation. Four teachers participated in this national LINCS project with the intent of developing a train the trainer model. Upon successful completion, the attendees hosted a session introducing the concepts during the state Indiana Association for Adult and Continuing Education (IAACE) conference to determine local program interest.

► **Burlington English Webinars** – Local program staff were offered opportunities to participate in a series of webinars that highlighted promising teaching practices. These training sessions were hosted by a myriad of state directors and professional development leaders. Topics included Collaboration, Communication, and Context for Successful Support of Adult Education; Success at a Distance: Effective Ideas for Remote Intake, Orientation & Teaching; and Leading Change in Challenging Times (presented by Indiana).

► **Leadership Excellence and Development Institute for Adult Educators. –** This leadership training, facilitated by the American Institutes for Research (AIR), featured nationally- recognized experts in adult education programming, research, and administration. Through a blended, project-based learning model, participants engaged in synchronous and asynchronous content learning and developed a Leadership-in-Action project at their own programs. Development of the project began PY 2020; its expected completion is spring of PY 2021.

**► Virtual Regional Meetings –** Due to social distancing and limited travel, regional directors and all state staff participated in monthly, virtual regional meetings. Topics typically focused upon local program successes and barriers; however, barriers tended to be of higher concern among local directors. One reoccurring theme was the consequences of the pandemic and how it continued to affect student enrollment, retention, and staff fatigue. The goal of each meeting was to share promising practices that could help mitigate barriers. Interestingly, performance was never of great concern. Statewide program performance continued to increase during the pandemic.

►**Monthly Professional Development Meetings** – The professional development team hosted monthly virtual meetings with PDFs and their directors to discuss performance goals and instructional strategies. During a number of these meetings, various guest speakers and vendors were invited to share promising classroom practices and resources.

► **Statewide Webinars** – The state office held monthly webinars for adult education providers. As the remnants of the pandemic continued, an emphasis on topics related to e-learning were covered and modeled, including provisional placement, remote proctoring, and online instruction. Promising practices were highlighted.

**► 2020 Fall IAACE Conference** – IDWD partners with the Indiana Association of Adult and Continuing Education (IAACE) each year to offer a variety of professional development opportunities at its annual conference. Due to the pandemic, the conference was offered virtually in April 2021. IAACE continues to offer virtual learning to teachers via its e-learning platform.

► **Coalition on Adult Basic Education (COABE) Virtual Conference** – IAACE partnered with COABE to offer members an opportunity to participate in the COABE Virtual Conference. The virtual conference was held in March; however, IAACE members had access to the recorded sessions for six months.

IAACE also partnered with IDWD to offer professional development credit for those who participated.

► **Evidence-Based Reading** – Prior to the pandemic, the professional development team procured a vendor that offered an in-person and pre- and post-webinars that offered robust statewide trainings for evidence-based reading. The training emphasized a process for teaching reading in the adult education multi-level classroom, and incorporated evidence-based practice and the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS). The vendor shared a similar PD evidence-based reading opportunity for Indiana adult educators that was made available to the adult education state team for distribution for PY 2020.

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

Indiana continued to utilize regional AECs to provide virtual technical assistance and professional development to local providers in the areas of program performance, reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, ELL, and distance education. AECs assisted with the development of local program professional development plans and were a liaison between eligible providers and WIOA partners. AECs interpreted performance data for local programs and determined areas for improvement with significant input from the professional development team. Two of the AECs shared professional development duties for the state. One AEC served as workforce education coordinator to further develop partnerships with adult education and employers. Another AEC served as the academic and career coach liaison with local programs to build a student support system. The InTERS data team provided technical assistance and training individually to local program personnel, especially in the areas of data collection and reporting.

During this period, two AECs transitioned to new roles of regional support managers for IDWD overseeing workforce operations with adult education responsibilities within a region. A third AEC became IDWD’s career exploration and advising coordinator with similar duties for adult education. Additionally, regional support managers with adult education responsibilities were hired in the remaining regions.

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

To monitor and evaluate the quality of adult education activities, program management, fiscal management, data management, and performance measures are continuously assessed. Three AECs served as part of the formal monitoring team. Informal monitoring, desk audits, data checks, and program visits were conducted by state central office staff, AECs, and the InTERS data team. Low performing programs were identified, in part, based on NRS table 4 results. Visits (in-person and virtually) were made to struggling programs.

Virtual monitoring was piloted and two struggling programs were placed on corrective action plans (CAPs). Virtual monthly meetings were held to discuss program goals, outcomes, and continuous improvement with these programs.

Likewise, a comprehensive risk assessment was performed on specific programs, and prior to the pandemic, on-site visits were made to view records and classes, and to interview personnel. Formal reports were sent to local providers after site visits. Local programs developed professional development plans, targeted measurable skill gains to increase academic gains, and developed strategies to reduce student separations. Electronic report cards were provided monthly to local programs outlining key metrics. Report cards presented comparisons to state and local data based on points in time. Quarterly reports submitted by PDFs were utilized to identify promising practices, technical assistance, and gaps in service. Promising practices were highlighted monthly during statewide webinars. Local program personnel were placed on the agenda to share innovations on the call.

**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.*

Overall, Indiana continued to perform at high levels with respect to measurable skill gains, high school equivalencies, and credential attainment. While enrollment was down from the previous year, a strong emphasis on incorporating hybrid and virtual instruction, coupled with in-person classes, when possible, was highlighted in professional development activities. In an assessment of core programs based on core indicators of performance, targeted instruction and a focused assessment program were key to achieving high measurable skill gain rates for ABE and ELL. These percentages exceeded core indicators of performance.

The pandemic hit ELL enrollment the hardest, and while recognizing challenges faced by ELL students with fewer in-person options, professional development activities focused on ensuring all students achieved measurable skill gains. Local providers modeled promising practices that were highlighted in monthly regional and professional development facilitator meetings and statewide webinars.

The measurable skill gain percentages for ABE and ELL were the highest the state has ever achieved based on a concerted effort to ensure that learners were afforded the best instructional strategies and support services in uncertain times.

An analysis of enrollment trends was conducted as numbers decreased and as the state office began efforts to rebuild enrollments, especially ELL, as the pandemic hit highs and lows. However, the statewide online only programs for ABE and ELL flourished and continued to grow during this period though concerns about retention and positive outcomes of students escalated as numbers climbed.

Building enrollment will be a focus after the pandemic subsides ensuring quality and effectiveness of service. An analysis of target populations and “most in need” will continue to be an emphasis as well.

Meanwhile, a goal to maintain a minimal enrollment in distance education on NRS Table 4C of 40 percent utilizing hybrid learning was set for all providers in professional development plans**.** Additionally, each program was required to share one best practice used each quarter that helped to increase distance learning.

Similar goals were set in local professional development plans for HSE and certification attainment and workforce partnerships. In addition to sharing promising practices each quarter, providers were required to address barriers to success. As expected, the pandemic stretched program personnel to the limit while creating new opportunities for growth.

PY 2020 Performance Outcomes

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 17,541 | * Student Enrollments
* Decrease from PY 19
 |
| 12,296 | * Level Gains (student may have achieved more than one gain)
* Decrease from PY 19
 |
| 4,744 | * HSEs and HS Diplomas Awarded
* Increase from PY 19
 |
| 1,375 | * WEI (Workforce Education Initiative) Enrollments
* 84.13% completion rate
 |
| 2,594 | * IET Participants
* 1,644 earned certifications
* 61.99% Measurable Skill Gains via Level Gains
 |
| 7,318 | * Employment Second Quarter after Exit
* Decrease from PY 2019 | Increase from PY 2018
 |
| 9,852 | * Employment Fourth Quarter after Exit
* Decrease from PY 2019 | Increase from PY 2018
 |
| 3,193 | * Attained Any Credential after Exit
* Increase from PY 2019 | Decrease from PY 2018
 |

IDWD has a system of state performance metrics in addition to the federal measures required under the National Reporting System. Above is a summary of outcomes that state staff shared broadly with practitioners in the field.

As stated earlier, this year saw a significant decrease in enrollments as the pandemic continued. Despite the decrease in students, the state showed strong numbers in several areas. The number of students obtaining their HSED in PY 2020 increased by 598. Indiana continued to be a leader in the number of high school equivalencies nationwide behind California and Florida.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Program Year | # of HSEs awarded |
| 2010 | 4,848 |
| 2011 | 5,683 |
| 2012 | 7,349 |
| 2013 | 6,759 |
| 2014 | 5,405 |
| 2015 | 5,132 |
| 2016 | 4,870 |
| 2017 | 4,989 |
| 2018 | 4,932 |
| 2019 | 4,146 |
| 2020 | 4,744 |

Of the 17,541 students enrolled, 21% were English Language Learners (ELL), down from 25% in PY 19. Of the ELLs, 52% entered instruction at the bottom two educational functioning levels (EFL). ELLs attended an average of 80 hours of instruction. Of the ELLs served, 65% made a level gain up from 50% last year.

As mentioned above, Indiana saw a decrease in the number of ABE/ASE students. Of the ABE/ASE student enrollments, 95% entered instruction at an EFL of Level 4 or below down slightly from PY 2019. The largest group (40%) entered at EFL Level 3. The overall ABE/ASE student group attended an average of 70 hours of instruction. Overall, 77% of students received a post-test, up from 72% in PY 2019.

At 50%, students between the age of 25-44 are the largest demographic. Particularly interesting to Indiana is the percentage of students who fell within the WIOA Youth age range. Thirty-four percent of Indiana enrollments were between the ages of 16-24. This percentage is slightly higher than the previous year of thirty-three percent. Although there was only a minimal increase in 16-17-year-old enrollments, IDWD shared this information at a local level to providers and regional workforce development boards as they looked to develop out-of-school youth programming.

**NRS Table Highlights**

***Table 4***

In summary, despite lower enrollments, Indiana finished PY 2020 with an overall Table 4 MSG of 70 percent, which exceeded the previous program year’s average of 64%. Indiana exceeded the national average of 36 percent.

As noted earlier, total enrollment in programs saw a significant decrease this year. This was due largely due to the remnants of the pandemic.

Total ELL enrollments decreased, as did ABE enrollments. However, the quality of ELL and ABE performance greatly increased on Table 4. ELL performance – PY 2020 was 65% as compared to PY 2019 at 50%. ABE performance – PY 2020 was 71% as compared to PY 2019 at 68%. Although overall enrollments saw a decrease, overall performance was excellent in the final analysis.

(As a preview to PY 2021, since enrollment was down, the state augmented the mid-year incentive to include a targeted enrollment goal for each local program.)

The pandemic affected employment and credential attainment indicators, too.

The second and fourth quarter after exit employment indicators were down from PY 2019 but an increase over PY 2018. The credential indicator was up about 350 but down by 307 from PY 2018.

**Integration with One-stop Partners**

*Describe how the State eligible agency, as the entity responsible for meeting one-stop requirements under 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.*

IDWD implemented a consortium model for adult education services in 2011. Eleven adult education consortia were created (the Indianapolis metropolitan area two boards were combined for adult education services) that aligned with the state’s one-stop economic growth regions. Consortia included local adult education providers, as well as other entities with interest in adult education service provision. Local board staff or representatives have served on and partnered with adult education ever since. As a result of this structure, the required WIOA integration of adult education into the one-stops had already taken place.

Indiana has 12 Workforce Development Boards (WDB) that are responsible for procurement of the one-stop operators and career services providers. Each adult education consortia chose a local provider to represent adult education on the WDB. At the state level the commissioner of IDWD serves on the Governor’s Workforce Cabinet. The commissioner represents adult education.

The WDBs are responsible for overseeing and ensuring all applicable career services are provided within the one-stop system. Adult education students have access to these services through one-stop offices as well as through adult one-stop staff who work at adult education sites. Additionally, local adult education programs are required to provide transition coaches who provide career services.

AEFLA funded career services in Indiana included outreach, intake, and orientation including initial assessment. These assessments included TABE and TABE CLAS-E as well as the KUDER Indiana Career Explorer. Indiana Career Explore included three brief assessments on interests, aptitude, and values and was required along with TABE for enrollment. In PY 2020 the Indiana Career Explorer contract was not funded by AEFLA, but the administration to eligible students was. Additional AEFLA funded career services included referrals and coordination of activities with other programs and services as well as the provision of information on the availability of supportive services with appropriate referrals. AEFLA does not fund the Eligible Training Provider List; however, staff funded by AEFLA use this list with program participants to provide performance information and program costs of eligible training and workforce providers.

A new vendor for Indiana Career Explorer was procured; the roll out began in PY 2021.

Meanwhile, Indiana developed and implemented an infrastructure cost policy; local providers completed these negotiations.

**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 for IELCE program funds and the number of grants awarded by your state to support IELCE programs.*

State town halls were held in December 2019 to announce the competition. IDWD released the multi-year grant competition for IELCE funds in February 2020. Eight grants were awarded with implementation beginning July 1, 2020. Subsequent years are grant continuations. Local providers may utilize both Section 243 funds and other funding for the provision of service.

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

Indiana Adult Education continued to provide technical assistance and professional development for IET as well as IELCE. IDWD established a formal IET/IELCE approval process. Programs must submit curriculum showing the components of an IET/IELCE class. Applications are then reviewed by central office staff and technical assistance is provided on any areas not meeting program requirements.

Statewide webinars highlighted the approval process for IET/IELCE and outlined considerations for local providers to follow. Local programs may utilize IELCE as a bridge program, especially for lower-level ELL students, if training was available. The competitive application included questions –

– What is the name of industry recognized certification? Describe any entry level requirements.

– What curriculum will be utilized? Attach the curriculum which includes descriptions of literacy and adult education, employability skills training, and occupational skill training components.

– Is the program length 40 hours or more and 14 weeks or less? How many hours will be dedicated to occupational training, employability training, and adult education?

– Describe regional demand for this occupation (list potential job positions, hiring companies, and Indiana Career Ready flame status).

Considerations included –

IET and IELCE

Whether the activities provide learning in context, including through IETs, so that the individual acquires the skills needed to transition to and complete postsecondary education and training programs, obtain and advance in employment leading to self-sufficiency, and to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship –

► Explain how the applicant has provided, or plans to provide, IET instruction to eligible individuals. Describe how College and Career Readiness standards are used by the applicant to enhance instruction. Explain how career readiness and workforce skills are taught, and/or plan to be taught, to eligible individuals. Describe how the applicant provided, and/or plans to provide, career awareness curriculum.

► What specific occupation or occupational sector will the applicant’s proposed IET for PY 2020 cover? Describe the intensity and quality of the adult education and literacy component of current and proposed IET course(s). Describe how occupationally relevant activities and materials have been, and will be, used in proposed IET program(s) for PY 2020. Explain which workforce training activities will be used in any proposed IET program(s) for PY 2020.

► How will the applicant provide these activities? Describe how the three required components (basic skills remediation, workforce preparation, and workforce training) of IET programs will occur simultaneously. Describe how the applicant intends to fund the training portion of proposed IET program(s). Does the applicant plan to offer the proposed IET in partnership with other organizations? If yes, explain this partnership.

► Describe how the three required components (basic skills remediation, workforce preparation, and workforce training) of IET programs will occur simultaneously. Describe how the applicant intends to fund the training portion of proposed IET program(s). Does the applicant plan to offer the proposed IET in partnership with other organizations? If yes, explain this partnership.

► The continuation application for PY 2021 required successful applicants to update information from their PY 2020 (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021) Adult Education Competitive Grant Application (Request for Application). Additionally, adult education providers described progress toward achieving goals, noted any adjustments, and provided justifications. Furthermore, the continuation application required programs to include how the organization planned to implement instruction in literacy and English language acquisition, the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, civic participation, and any workforce training to meet the needs of eligible individuals. Each provider was required to provide a potential list of trainings and numbers of eligible individuals to be served.

*● 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©(1) and discuss any performance results, challenges, and lessons learned from implementing those program goals.*

Webinars provided updates to the field about IET/IELCE enrollments, including applications approved, completion rate, and certification rate. Top programs were 180 Skills (several certification programs), CNA, Paraprofessional, MOS (Microsoft Office Specialist Certification), and MSSC-CPT (Manufacturing Skills Standards Council).

Indiana Career Ready (ICR) enabled students, employers, and educators to use employer job requirements and job demand in making training and education decisions. As a part of the IELCE application process, adult education programs must access ICR and submit the job demand for positions that will result from a proposed training. This information ensured that training aligned with employer needs as well as job openings.

● *Describe how the applicant has aligned, and will align, its service with the workforce development regional plans (local plans). Include an explanation of how the applicant plans to ensure continuous alignment with the regional plan (local plan). Describe the applicant’s relationship with the one-stop partners in the communities it serves.*

In the request for proposals, the competitive application for PY 2020 addressed –

► The extent to which the eligible provider demonstrated alignment between proposed activities and services and the strategy and goals of the local plan, as well as the activities and services of the one-stop partners –

Had the organization or program worked with the one-stop partner to ensure the efficient delivery of adult education services to eligible individuals? Did the organization or program discuss plans for co-enrollment, referral services, and infrastructure costs? Did the applicant establish, or retain, a working relationship with the one-stop partners in the communities it intended to serve?

As mentioned, IDWD adult education programs are organized into regional consortia. These consortia align with the state’s local economic growth regions. WDB members have participated in these regional consortia for many years. As a result, local WDBs have been involved in the adult education WIOA implementation process including integrating IELCE with the local workforce development system. IDWD is using lessons learned from previous programming to effectively implement IET programming across the state, including IELCE programming.

**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.*

Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) adopted Indiana Academic Standards in April 2014 for K-12. With few variations these align with the Common Core. IDWD has adopted OCTAE’s College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards for Adult Education a subset of the Common Core.

**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.*

Indiana measures recidivism by criminal acts resulting in rearrests, reconviction, and/or return to prison with or without a new sentence during a three-year period following the offender’s date of release from an Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) facility.

In 2020, of offenders who recidivated, approximately 34.7% returned to IDOC for the commission of a new crime, compared to approximately 65.3% for a technical rule violation of post-release supervision. For the 2017 release cohort, 38.16% of those released were recommitted to the IDOC within 3 years of release, either for a new conviction or post-release supervision violation.

The Indiana experience indicated that a returning citizen who has not completed the HSE is 2.8 times more likely to become a recidivist than one who has achieved the HSE. Interestingly, research specific to Indiana also revealed –

* Incarcerated adults who attended correctional, academic adult education programs and achieved at least one academic gain have a recidivism rate of 29.7%.
* Those individuals who did not enroll in academic adult education programs had a recidivism rate of 67.8%.
* Continuing research specific to Indiana identified two of the most significant variables of decreasing recidivism are formal education attainment and post-release employment.



Combining workforce and education was not an unusual concept to Indiana. Governor Holcomb and his administration have made them the state’s central focus as noted in his State of the State addresses in 2018, 2019, and 2020. Those remarks, plus the increasing investments Indiana is making in adult education and training programs, clearly demonstrated the state’s support of promising programs. In his 2020 State of the State Address, Governor Holcomb challenged IDOC to pair adult and career technical education with pre-release validated job opportunities for offenders post-release.

**Continuing Impact of COVID 19 on IDOC’s Adult Schools**

Correctional institutions are still feeling short-term yet ongoing impacts from easily spread communicable diseases.

IDOC facilities are still operating under guidance from several agencies at the state level which included develop and implementation of individual facility plans that provided operational, prevention, and disease management. The individual facility plans typically addressed –

* Isolating housing units when a substantial number of IDP were ill.
* Prohibiting inmates from multiple housing units to comingle.
* Implementing stringent social distancing requirements including programming activities.
* Restricting staff assignments to certain areas/dorms to reduce staff movement among various physical settings.

Since June 2021, 14 of 15 facilities were operating at normal capacity with limited disruptions due to COVID-19 protocols. While attendance hours have increased, some facilities still have class size and housing unite co-mingling limitations. (The transition from TASC® to HiSET® in PY 2021 resulted in a loss of several weeks of testing due to material orders and staff training along with the limitation of first-time testing cohorts to 10 offenders, will result in lower HSE achievements in 2021.) Because of the pandemic, the temporary closing of schools and/or the restrictions placed on movement and sizes of classes have reduced outcomes overall.