

KANSAS NARRATIVE REPORT PY 20

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 Kansas Workforce Innovation Act (WIOA) Conference was developed in partnership between the Kansas Department of Commerce, Adult Education, and Career Technical Education in 2018. The WIOA Conference, co-sponsored by the Kansas Board of Regents and the Kansas Department of Commerce, aims to bring together all required partners to focus on how they may work together to improve the educational opportunities for Kansans. The WIOA Conference planned and scheduled for the fall of 2020 had to be canceled due to COVID-19 mitigation protocols, but face-to-face and virtual options are slated for the Conference in fall 2021. Content is designed to foster collaboration amongst all stakeholders and work towards optimal service delivery across the state. The conference provides a wide variety of professional development for all WIOA partners.

The Accelerating Opportunity: Kansas (AO-K) initiative aims to help students who have low basic skills earn valued occupational credentials, obtain well-paying jobs, and sustain rewarding careers. The initiative focuses on students who are interested in earning technical credentials and whose math, reading, writing, or English language skills are between the 6th- and 12th-grade levels. In particular, AO-K changes the delivery of adult education for these students by allowing community and technical colleges to enroll them in for-credit career and technical education (CTE) courses while they earn their high school credentials, improve their basic academic skills, or build their English language abilities. The CTE programs in which students enroll are structured as credit-bearing college and career pathways with enhanced support services. Each pathway must incorporate integrated instruction, which combines basic skills and technical training that is contextualized for the occupation targeted. The AO-K approach not only makes CTE courses accessible for students with low basic skills but also enhances the quality of instruction by having an adult education instructor team-teach with the CTE instructor. AO-K changes how colleges coordinate with government, business, and community partners. It reforms policy and practice to make it easier for students with low basic skills to access and succeed in postsecondary education and the workforce. With businesses reopening and repositioning as COVID mitigation protocols eased, adult education centers reached out to local employers to continue to develop AO-K pathways responsive to the workforce needs of the community. One of the largest local workforce areas has been heavily involved with a partnership to provide on-site adult education services at the largest health care system in the region, with classes continuing virtually throughout PY20.

Through the Kansas State Plan for Career Technical Education and the Kansas State Plan for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, a competitive braided funding grant opportunity between AEFLA and Perkins was established for support of activities to enhance student learning, retention, and completion in career pathways. The Integrating Adult Basic Education with Career Technical Education (ABE with CTE) grant focuses on implementing new partnerships between adult education and Perkins-approved career technical education programs to improve student success, implementing strategies which result in completion of CTE degree and certificate programs in Perkins-approved programs, and implementing contextualized academic instruction by adult education and CTE instructors in the CTE classroom. In PY20, seven Kansas colleges participated in this opportunity. The projects focused on providing faculty support, implementing new student services, and adjusting to the changing landscape of education by providing innovative ways of delivering instruction. Through this opportunity, ABE and CTE faculty were able to work together and develop new effective ways to deliver blended curriculum. CTE faculty members were trained in ABE skills and ABE faculty on industry-specific requirements in CTE programs. Faculty members worked together to develop employability skills curricula, assess student readiness and learning progress, co-teach courses, and assist students through challenges during the pandemic while keeping them on track for CTE completion. Virtual learning was at the center of most projects, and both ABE and CTE programs benefited from the availability of new formats and uninterrupted service to students.

The Perkins V legislation requires a comprehensive local needs assessment that is coordinated by a stakeholder team. Postsecondary CTE programs reinforced connections between ABE and CTE with either local funds or Perkins V Local Grant funds under the Integrating Academics goal [Perkins V Sec. 134 (b)(4)] or the Special Populations goal [Perkins V Sec. 134 (b)(5)].

- *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 receiving allocated funds, 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 online College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS), STudent Achievement in Reading (STAR), 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. 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, especially with the decrease in face-to-face professional development opportunities.

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 FY2018 and resulted in 219 faculty and staff participating in the training. The training continues to be used broadly across the state, with 107 modules completed between July 2020 and June 2021. Kansas adult education requires that all new faculty will have

completed the Overview and either the ELA modules (I – III) or the Math modules (I – III) within the first six months of hire. A feedback loop regarding the training has revealed that faculty are using the training to impact their classrooms by enhancing lesson plan development.

A contract was developed with Wichita State University (the learning management system host for CCRS) during PY19 to continue services as well as adding a resource repository to promote instructional collaboration and resource sharing. 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 maintain this positive trend.

- *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 webinars which have proven even more valuable as the mode of delivery pivoted to virtual. These webinars provide a foundation to determine additional technical assistance that may be needed. The annual Kansas Adult Education Conference is held each spring and was offered in virtual format in April 2021. The event features a one-day pre-conference program leaders' meeting where content closely mirrors the annual summer meeting. Each year, KBOR hosts monthly meetings for program directors, during which programs can ask questions and receive technical assistance. In addition, a group training session was offered for the Adult Education Student Information System (AESIS), 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.

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 an experienced 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 with 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, 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.

The monitoring process has been completely converted and administered virtually. Face-to-face monitoring is preferred when possible, but the virtual monitoring instrument is available as needed. 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.

Programs that had moved to distance learning environments in the spring of 2020 began moving some classes back to face-to-face instruction during PY20. By the end of PY20, programs were re-opened but maintained a strong virtual presence, with nearly three-fourths of all classes providing hybrid, hyflex, or virtual learning options. With a strong first and second quarter in PY19, despite the pandemic, Kansas finished the year with a total of 6,168 participants, achieving 3850 (62.42%) Measurable Skill Gains (MSGs).

With the effects of the pandemic still being felt in PY20, total enrollment was down to 4,324 participants, but Kansas educators served their students well, with 2868 (66.33%) MSGs achieved. 5 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.

Kansas has been in the top quartile in the nation in Measurable Skill Gains every year (3rd in PY17 and PY18 and 2nd in PY19 and PY20). However, decreased enrollment and outreach to harder-to-serve populations has put pressure on programs to maintain such a high level of gains.

Total ELL enrollments decreased, as did ABE enrollments. However, the quality of ELL and ABE performance remained steady on Table 4. ELL performance in PY 2020, at 61%, held steady from the 61% in PY 2019. ABE performance in PY 2020 saw a slight decrease at 58%, compared to 60% in PY 2019.

As noted earlier, total enrollment in programs saw a significant decrease this year. This was due largely to the effects of the pandemic. Despite lower enrollments, Kansas finished PY 2020 with an overall Table 4 MSG of 59 percent, which exceeded the national average of 44 percent.

PY2020 Employment (Second Quarter After Exit) increased to 58%, compared to 49% in PY2019. Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit) also showed an increase, with 53% in PY2020, compared to 48% in PY2019.

The pandemic most strongly impacted credential attainment. The credential indicator decreased from 53% in PY2019 to 35% in PY2020.

Median earnings increased in PY2020 to \$5,495, up from \$5,064 in PY2019.

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. Technical assistance will be offered on marketing, student retention, and student post testing to ensure programs are continuing to grow enrollment and help students achieve outcomes.

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 roles 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 a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with their local board that includes an Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) 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 WIOA Conference, Accelerating Opportunity: Kansas, and 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 assessment online, 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 students qualify for services through a partner program, the students 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.

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 2021 program year, KBOR staff worked with local programs to broaden the availability of IET programs in the state's one-stop system. IET pathways continue to be available for eligible students and receive support from adult education and workforce partners. State staff continue to work with programs to develop additional partnerships focused on equipping and retaining a skilled workforce.

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 information on eligible providers of education, training, and workforce services by program and type of provider to participants. It also houses education, training, and employment information for participants based on geographic location (workforce area and county) and provider type. While this is 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 in FY2018, and five-year grants were awarded to seven IELCE providers: Butler Community College, Dodge City Community College, Garden City Community College, Johnson County Community College, Kansas City Kansas Community College, Seward County Community College, and Wichita State University Campus of Applied Sciences and Technology.

- *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 AO-K @ Work program originally funded by a Walmart grant and the Integrating Academics with CTE projects.

- The partnership with Kansas's largest health care system continues to flourish. This non-native-English-speaking population of students is being provided on-site adult education and training services and 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.
- A new partnership began in PY20, with local adult education providers holding on-site English classes at KC Steak for employees whose native language is not English.
- 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 higher success rates and lower withdrawal rates.

- Several programs have reported practices that they would highlight as exemplary, including the Introduction to Career Pathways class, speech projects to help develop confidence in oral English, and the development of a list of 250 key vocabulary terms identified by KC Steak Company and delivered through contextualized lessons.

Students hope to continue their education as businesses have begun allowing adult education instructors back into the facilities, and employees have resumed 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 impacted. 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 plan to present more about the ability to serve students in the workplace to the executive directors of the local workforce areas during upcoming conferences.

KBOR is working towards expansion of our state’s Accelerating Opportunity – Kansas (AO-K) network and seeing additional programs desire to be involved. The programs are typically providing education and training in fields designated as high-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. These Success Coaches focus on students’ individual interests and are 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.
- Workforce personnel are invited to present information regarding services during Orientation. Various local employers promote the program’s courses, with some businesses requiring ELA courses (if necessary), while the program receives financial scholarships and incentive pay, and the city provides local transportation. This program has created 12-credit-hour career pathways with basic skills 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.
- Sixteen businesses across Kansas are being served with on-site instruction in English Language Acquisition, skills for the workplace, and high-school diploma preparation.

Classes are held at times compatible with employee work schedules and are available to participants at no cost.

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 with post-secondary education providers.

Prior to the pandemic, a statewide best practice was to invite workforce centers to participate in Orientation and continue to have center staff provide updates and interact with students. As these practices have proven extremely valuable to all, they have slowly restarted as local health guidelines allowed.

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 online CCRS training, which is required for all adult education administrators and instructional staff.

In order to further align to the CCRS standards, seven new modules were developed: Welcome to Teaching Adults, What makes an Adult Learner Unique, Andragogy, Think as a Facilitator, Evaluation of Adult Learners, Planning a Lesson, and Creating Life-Long Learners. These courses focus on instructional theory and implementation of practice and provide an overview of teaching theory and best practices for classroom implementation. These new courses are 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 FY 2019, 150 students have been released. Of those, 3 have reoffended. This gives Kansas a recidivism rate of 2% for FY 2019 among offenders who have received services through adult education.

For FY 2020, 250 students have been released. Of those, 5 have reoffended. This gives Kansas a recidivism rate of 2% for FY 2020 among offenders who have received services through adult education.

For FY 2021, 89 students have been released. Of those, 3 have reoffended. This gives Kansas a recidivism rate of 3.37% for FY 2021 among offenders who have received services through adult education.

In comparison, the three-year recidivism rate for all offenders for the state of Kansas is 36%.