## Section 1: State Leadership Funds (AEFLA Section 223)

### *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).*

Minnesota funds 10 transitions regions across the state. The purpose of funding these regions is to build capacity within the Minnesota Adult Education system to transition adult learners to training, postsecondary, or employment. Each region, one of which is the Department of Corrections, has a transitions coordinator who facilitates the development of a transitions regional plan. This plan includes activities that, preferably, are regional in scope so that all adult education providers in the region can benefit from the activities. The funding supports the creation of new curriculum for career focused classes, development of new career pathways, and efforts to connect with employers. The Adult Education Leadership Team (the state team at the Minnesota Department of Education) promoted Integrated Education and Training (IET) as an approach to use in the development of the plans. Some of the activities that were written into the plans included: manufacturing, construction trades, service and trades, food service management/ServSafe©, emerging technology, train the trainer for Microsoft Office Specialists, blueprint reading, OSHA 10, and ParaPro.

The funding also supports work done with public post-secondary programs. Community and technical colleges are the largest training providers in Minnesota. The Adult Education Leadership Team has been working with multiple partners on developmental education reform that would allow adult learners to bypass developmental education or reduce the amount of time in such coursework and go into their training program. This past year, some adult education programs started teaching the lower levels of developmental education at no cost to the student and other programs worked on embedding an adult education instructor into a college gateway course to ensure learner success.

There have been a few more requests from employers to offer training. We are considering promoting this at a statewide level but have not determined if it is best done statewide or locally. All of these efforts require collaboration and alignment with WIOA core partners and other one-stop partners. The youth, adult, and dislocated worker programs under Title l are the WIOA entities that we work with most closely. We are also working with Title III and Title IV in improving services to clients.

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

State leadership funds were used during 2020–2021 to support one Minnesota Adult Education Leadership Team 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 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 staff, PD providers, and local adult education instructors and administrators.

**All PD activities were held virtually in 2020–2021 due to the ongoing pandemic.** Key events and attendance totals for these are listed below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Professional Development Event**  | **Number of Events** | **Attendance Totals** |
| Statewide ABE Summer Institute   | 1 2-day event | 454 |
| ABE Foundations for New Adult Ed Staff Webinar Series | 3  | 95 |
| Statewide Teaching & Learning at a Distance Conference | 1 | 288 |
| Statewide Spring Conference  | 1 | 259 |
| Adult Language and Literacy Institute (ESL and ABE) | 1 2-day event | 160 |
| ABE Math Institute  | 1 | 105 |
| Adult Career Pathway Institute  | 1 | 68 |
| Support Staff Conference | 1 | 110 |
| Assessment Trainings | 10 | 277 |
| Trainings for volunteers working in ABE programs | 146 | 2792 |
| ABE Volunteer Management Conference  | 1 | 115 |

In addition to these events, PD was provided through a number of long-term job-embedded virtual activities, including a College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) Implementation Cohort, a Student Achievement in Reading (STAR) cohort, an Evidence-Based Reading Instruction (EBRI) Study Circle, a Technology Integration Initiative Cohort, a Distance Learning Instructional Issues Cohort, and a Pronunciation Study Circle.

Most Minnesota adult education programs continued to offer remote and distance education options, and much of the PD offered this year was designed to support high-quality distance learning. Some examples include:

* STAR programs provided training and support around virtual STAR instruction through webinars, newsletter articles, and technical assistance.
* The annual Math Institute focused on distance education and the flipped classroom, and a math webinar series focused on tools for virtual math instruction.
* Computer-based and remote NRS testing was supported through virtual trainings, technical assistance, and the bulk purchase and distribution of computer-based test administrations to local providers.

In addition, due to the increase in use of teacher-developed asynchronous lessons during the pandemic, a teacher verification model (TVM) for counting proxy hours was developed to support high-quality asynchronous instruction. In order to become certified to use the TVM, teachers must complete an online course, develop a sample TVM lesson, participate in a live webinar that includes time for peer feedback on sample lessons, and engage in coaching as needed to ensure their lesson meets all requirements.

Minnesota adult education professional development providers and the statewide PD committee continued to share and build their expertise and procedures around virtual PD delivery this year. Feedback on PD activities was consistently positive, and participants found the PD to be engaging, useful, relevant, and well-run. To ensure they were accessible to those who could not attend the live events, most virtual PD events were recorded and archived on the [MN ABE PD YouTube Channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UClUrz7VTkCnXb_7wPfh2U1w) for practitioners to view individually or with colleagues.

#### *Provision of technical assistance to funded eligible providers as described in section 223(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. These resources helped to provide essential areas of technical assistance, such as: maintaining the Minnesota Adult Basic Education website ([www.mnabe.org](http://www.mnabe.org)); providing frequent communication with local program staff through quarterly webinars, fall meetings with adult education managers, spring grant application meetings, 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.

This year technical assistance to providers focused heavily on guidance around school closures, continuity of services, and distance education. Guidance and information were provided to local programs through frequent webinars and written statements. In addition, facilitated discussions on webinars offered attendees the opportunity to ask questions and share strategies and resources with peers as they made decisions about what programming models to offer and how best to serve their learners.

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

(1) *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 Adult Education Leadership Team is focusing on increasing 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; Minnesota distance learning website (<https://www.literacymn.org/distancelearning>); *Distance and Blended Learning Basics* online course; and online resource libraries in the areas of ACES (Academic, Career, and Employability Skills), adult career pathways, adult diploma/high school equivalency, adult education staff orientation, College and Career Readiness standards, cultural competency, ESL, numeracy, project-based learning, reading, science, 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 has 39 consortia that have over 330 adult education providers combined and a multitude of online learning options. These eligible providers work closely with their one-stop partners and understand the roles each partner plays in supporting the client. Referrals and co-enrollment are encouraged. Co-enrollment is highest between adult education and the WIOA youth program. Several eligible providers have been in the process of trying to shift the delivery of integrated education and training (IET) to online coursework. This would make the IET approach more accessible for many individuals. Two trainings were held to share practices and discuss the possibility of moving to a regional model. It has been difficult to offer the training portion of IET that ends with an industry recognized certificate at National Reporting System (NRS) educational functioning levels. Best practices were shared with the field on building pathways that end in employment and how to work with some of the employers. Initially, these have been entry level jobs for newcomers but the engagement with employers is a practice we will continue to highlight.

(3) *Using technology to improve program effectiveness through training and technical assistance focused on preparing instructors and program administrators to identify and utilize technology to enhance instruction, programming, and distance education.* The Minnesota Department of Education Adult Education Leadership Team contracted with Literacy Minnesota to provide professional development and technical assistance in the areas of educational technology, digital literacy, and distance learning. In 2020–2021, the Minnesota Adult Education Technology & Distance Learning Team led 40 training webinars and webinars with 2,328 participants attending. Trainings focused on a wide variety of topics, including remote digital literacy instruction, distance learning best practices, educational technology tools, and the use of distance learning platforms. In addition, two job-embedded professional development initiatives focused on technology and distance learning were offered in 2020–2021 and were particularly helpful to instructors and programs in their efforts to increase students’ access to technology, digital literacy instruction, and high-quality distance education during the pandemic:

* **Technology Integration Initiative Cohort:** Training and support for adult education program teams on developing and implementing a digital equity plan for their program
* ***DL 102: Instructional Issues*:** Coaching and support for instructors around distance learning instructional challenges

Two new self-paced online courses were developed to support effective distance education: *Distance and Blended Learning Basics for Minnesota Adult Education* and *Using an LMS to Build Teacher-Created Distance Learning Courses*. A complete list of current self-paced online courses offered through Literacy Minnesota can be found at: [https://literacymn.crhosts.cloud/](https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fliteracymn.crhosts.cloud%2F&data=04%7C01%7CAstrid.Liden%40state.mn.us%7C99873c6a86ba4ccde0ce08d896e047e6%7Ceb14b04624c445198f26b89c2159828c%7C0%7C0%7C637425237310836097%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=%2Bw7Kx9LU4c6EBTV%2B8ZADlrQ5pxBcYJlTenmYbMI%2BygI%3D&reserved=0).

More information about Minnesota Adult Education distance learning current training and resources can be found at: <https://www.literacymn.org/distancelearning>.

In order to support student technology access and digital literacy skills, state adult education supplemental service funding was offered to adult education consortia so that they could purchase devices, internet service, and/or staffing to help students access and utilize technology for learning. Literacy Minnesota, the technology and distance learning professional development provider, also provided training and resources to local providers to support their digital navigation efforts.

Finally, 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 online synchronous and asynchronous training.

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

The state Adult Education 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 adult education data; review of NRS data; expenditure verification via submission of audit-certified expenditure reports; site visits to local adult education 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**: The Minnesota Department of Education Adult Education Leadership Team continues to collaborate with and provide state leadership resources to Literacy Minnesota ([www.literacymn.org](http://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” emails and a wide range of resources on their website. Most tutors work in settings where their work supports that of a licensed adult education teacher.

Because so many Minnesota adult education programs were still only offering remote instruction, this year Literacy Minnesota offered a series of high-quality, targeted training webinars to improve volunteers’ ability to deliver quality instruction remotely, including *Remote Instruction 101*, remote instructional strategies, and training on using a variety of video conferencing tools and other technology tools for online engagement. The Foundations of Remote Instruction Certificate Program helped volunteers to develop a solid grasp of the fundamentals of remote tutoring and teaching. Literacy Minnesota also led trainings for adult education program teachers and administrators on ways to use volunteers to support remote instruction.

**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 adult education providers. 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. Due to the increased amount of and innovations in distance education, the Distance Learning Team (DL Team) revised the distance learning online course and added training on the new Teacher Verification Model. The DL Team is made up of adult education staff from Literacy Minnesota, the Minnesota Department of Education Adult Education Leadership Team, and local providers.

**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 support 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 2018–2019** | **FY 2019–2020** | **FY 2020–2021** |
| Measurable skill gain (MSG) | 42.56% | 36.89% | 23.01% |
| Employment at second quarter after exit | 37.59% | 37.74% | 34.25% |
| Employment at fourth quarter after exit | 33.54% | 36.46% | 35.26% |
| Median quarterly earnings at second quarter after exit | $5,660 | $6,070 | $6,188 |
| Credential Attainment | 22.88% | 13.41% | 19.03% |

Key data points for Minnesota Adult Education include:

* Outcomes increased in WIOA indicators for median earnings and for credential attainment from 2019–2020 to 2020–2021.
* Outcomes declined for the employment indicators and for MSG (MSG results were below the target due to COVID-related disruptions, especially in testing).

Minnesota collects data information via data match with the adult education, state unemployment, and Minnesota State postsecondary data systems. Minnesota does not use surveys to collect official data.

**COVID Impact**: COVID has had a major impact on adult education in Minnesota. Throughout the entire 2020–2021 year, programs have had to quickly adapt back and forth between in-person programming and distance learning due to COVID-19. Due to these disruptions and the implications of COVID, contact hours have declined by 45%, enrollees have declined by 22%, participant numbers have declined by nearly 10,000 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 started implementing a teacher verification model (TVM) to create more flexibility for program staff so they can count the effective instructional models they are implementing.

COVID has also decreased employment, median earnings and credential attainment outcomes due to exited participants not starting careers or completing postsecondary because they are: apprehensive about safety concerns with in-person jobs or postsecondary courses; needing to stay home with children attending school virtually; taking care of family members who are sick; unable to find careers that are paying family-sustaining wages; etc.

**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, special data analysis virtual discussions open to all adult education providers, and during quarterly meetings with state database staff.

The results are also shared with providers in the state adult education report card and help define program quality expectations in the state grant application and review process. The MSG results and targets are utilized to create benchmarks in the Minnesota Adult Education Statewide Report Card. The state report card and targets can be found online on the MNABE Accountability page (<http://www.mnabe.org/accountability-reporting/performance-targets-results>).

The majority of adult education programs have still been proctoring NRS tests using paper forms. The Adult Education Leadership Team prioritized building local programs’ use of computer-based tests over the last year. Our state assessment trainers have been promoting and offering more training on computer-based testing and remote testing. Using state funding, more than 25,000 computer-based TABE and CASAS test administrations were purchased and distributed to providers with staff that were trained on the assessments. More programs are trying computer-based testing, but the providers are facing challenges with remote testing. The Adult Education Leadership Team is considering contracting with an entity to offer remote NRS testing statewide for distance education students at programs where they do not have the expertise with remote testing.

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 SPARC 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 Adult Education Leadership Team delegates its one-stop responsibilities to 39 consortia of eligible providers. There are 330 sites across the state that are funded to provide access to adult education and literacy programs and services. Access to career services takes different forms across the state. Several adult education consortia have at least one eligible provider who has placed an individual at a CareerForce Center, whereas other consortia choose to train partner staff who are on site at the CareerForce Center. A few centers use technology to provide a direct link to program staff who can provide services. The state received a Workforce Innovation Fund federal grant to create a new website (<https://www.careerforcemn.com>). One of the features of the website was to build in an electronic referral system. The website has the capability; however, there have been issues with getting all partners to use the system, which therefore isn’t providing the best service to the client.

With the exception of the Department of Corrections, all adult education providers offer outreach. All providers offer intake, orientation, and can provide the career service function of initial assessment of skill levels in areas including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency. All adult education consortia have had training on workforce preparation and how to build those skills into every class. In addition, Northstar Digital Literacy modules are taught at some CareerForce Centers. The promotion of [Bridge to Benefits](http://bridgetobenefits.org/Home2) by adult education programs connects learners to supportive services.

Minnesota is a locally driven state and as such each one-stop operator negotiates infrastructure costs between CareerForce partners. Some adult education programs rent space at a CareerForce Center as their contribution, others provide additional trainings and services as their contribution, and still others cover all assessment costs as their contribution. Infrastructure costs have been an area of confusion in Minnesota. During 2020, there were three meetings with staff from the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) where WIOA Titles I, lll, and IV are operated. DEED sought guidance from their regional Department of Labor office regarding some of the questions partners were asking. This caused a delay in infrastructure agreements.

Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) were signed by July 1, 2020, for the 16 local [workforce development areas](https://mn.gov/deed/assets/workforce-development-areas_tcm1045-264931.pdf). As in the past, complaints were received by the Adult Education Leadership Team from local adult education partners. The complaint is usually around the lack of involvement of adult education partners in developing the MOU. Developing the MOU is a task that is often assigned to a CareerForce staff member who sends out the document for signatures. Adult education providers would rather build the MOU together with all partners so that all partners understand the roles and what each entity can contribute.

Each local board has an adult education representative. This representative represents all the eligible adult education providers within the workforce development area. There are also adult education representatives on committees of some workforce development boards. For instance, there are adult education representatives on the Career Pathways and youth committees.

## 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; and*

#### *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 IELCE grants are on a different grant cycle than the AEFLA grants. The IELCE grant competition is open every three years in Minnesota. The last competition was in 2019. Twelve grantees were awarded grants the first year. Due to COVID, there was some underspending, so two more grantees were added in 2021 for a total of 14 grantees.

Minnesota has had a difficult time in meeting the requirements to provide IELCE services in combination with integrated education and training (IET) activities. Traditionally, these funds have gone to serve English Language Acquisition (ELA) in combination with civics and citizenship. Minnesota does a tremendous job at offering these services together. However, by adding IET it has been more difficult to meet the requirements. Although federal regulation does not mandate that those participating in the ELA/Civics portion of the grant must participate in the IET portion of the grant, the assumption is that is how the model should be designed. Most trainings require a stronger understanding of the English language to successfully complete the IET training. We have grantees who will offer an ELA/Civics class and then offer an IET separately from the ELA/Civics to meet the requirements. COVID definitely had an impact on the training portion of the IET. Many students did not have the technology or know-how to set it up in order to participate. Additionally, many of the trainings could not be offered online, although work is being done to make this possible.

Minnesota has several IELCE grantees who have done incredible work in building pathways for adults that prepare and place the participants in unsubsidized employment in in-demand occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency. These programs have been highlighted and shared with the ABE field in Minnesota. COVID did cause some disruption in placing people in employment and offering training that could be done virtually. This impacted many of the smaller programs. Overall, Minnesota is seeing progress in this area.

All IELCE applications are reviewed by their Local Workforce Development Board and the feedback from the board is taken into consideration. Applicants are expected to align the training to a career or industry that is in-demand in their local area. In addition, we ask that providers work with their local one-stop partners to help place and support participants.

## Section 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.*

#### *Optional – Describe implementation efforts, challenges, and any lessons learned.*

Minnesota has adopted three sets of content standards for Adult Education: 1) the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education (CCRS) for English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics; 2) the Minnesota 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](http://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 2021–2022, 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 Adult Education are drawn from the Common Core State Standards, and therefore have strong alignment with the Minnesota K-12 standards.

When Minnesota 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 Minnesota Adult Education content standards. In addition, they must submit a content standards implementation plan and provide evidence of standards integration to date.

Extensive professional development opportunities support the implementation of content standards in Minnesota Adult Education. The *CCRS Foundations* online course provides an introduction to the CCR standards for English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics in a self-paced format. Participants can complete the entire course for ELA and/or Mathematics, or access specific topics for a refresher or further practice. This course is a prerequisite requirement for several Minnesota Adult Education professional development activities, including the CCRS Implementation Cohort.

The *CCRS Implementation Cohort Training*, designed to support implementation of the standards at the local program level, is being delivered on a biannual basis. 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 provide leadership and training for standards implementation to their colleagues. Prior to this year, the cohort was delivered through a combination of in-person institutes, webinars, online communication, and local implementation activities. In 2020–2021, the cohort was successfully conducted completely at a distance, with virtual institutes and remote peer observations taking the place of in-person ones.

Ongoing PD opportunities such as CCRS support webinars, conference sessions, and newsletter articles provided guidance on and examples of standards-based instruction and resources in virtual instruction. Resources to support individual and program-based PD around the standards were also disseminated via the CCR Standards Resource Library (<https://atlasabe.org/resources/ccr-standards/>), including a CCRS professional learning community guide, CCRS classroom videos and viewing guides, and CCRS Teacher Workouts (short, focused PD activities).

In June 2021, a team of Minnesota instructional leaders and professional developers participated in the national Standards-in-Action (SIA) 2.0 Training, aimed at equipping educators to support English Language Learners (ELLs) with both English Language Arts and math content. This team will be incorporating SIA 2.0 tools and strategies in PD focused on standards-based instruction for ELLs.

## 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 7,257 incarcerated individuals as of July 1, 2021. 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 2020–June 2021), 37% 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](https://mn.gov/doc/assets/Prison_Education_Evaluation_Research_in_Brief_Final_tcm1089-270907.pdf),” 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%” (3). 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 (3). 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 offenders 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 26% of people in corrections in Minnesota do not have a secondary credential. In the 2020–2021 program year, enrollees in corrections adult education programs generated 372,726 contact hours; 43% of correctional students achieved a measurable skill gain. Contact hours dropped 40% between 2019–2020 and 2020–2021. This decrease is attributed to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

MN DOC has an education-first policy, which means individuals who do not have a secondary credential (a high school diploma or high school equivalency diploma) are required to enroll in adult education and achieve a secondary credential through one of three options: a GED, high school, or state standard adult diploma. Once learners complete a secondary credential, they are eligible for work assignments within the facility and/or to enroll into a post-secondary (career technical or credit-based) program.

Twenty-six (26) Standard Adult High School Diplomas and eleven (11) credit-based high school diplomas were earned by adult education students in Minnesota correctional facilities from July 2020–June 2021. Adult education students in Minnesota’s correctional facilities also performed well on the GED exam, with 133 test-based high school equivalency diplomas issued in 2020–2021. The GED passing rate for MN DOC programs was 84%. Adult education programming and assessment was significantly impacted by COVID-19 related restrictions throughout FY 2021.

Education within the Minnesota Department of Corrections is based on a vision of inclusive excellence. 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 adult education within Minnesota prisons. MN DOC funds their education program with adult education funding and also with supplemental corrections funding.