**Montana Narrative Report 2020-2021**

**State Leadership Funds**

**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).**

A primary use of state leadership funds has always been to further enhance the WIOA mission and vision by including career pathway integration into adult education classrooms to align with employment and training services of our core partners, as well as labor market needs. Programs continually analyze instruction, commercially developed materials used, computer software/distance learning platforms utilized, and types of instructor developed resources for each educational functioning level. This analysis assists teachers in discovering how well the materials they use provide contextualized learning experiences with a scope and sequence that truly supports the college and career readiness standards and student transition to employment, postsecondary education, and training. Teachers engage in reflective activities that help them understand how they are meeting core partner needs through adult education instructional activities. Core partner coordination, recruitment of diverse clients, intake, orientation, and client services remain integral to career pathway integration. Coordination of services is crucial to recruit and engage clients in a manner that results in occupational training, postsecondary education, and employment in a progressive career path.

Integrated Education and Training (IET) programs have been an ongoing focus of WIOA adult education providers in Montana, and we are seeing great strides and growth with IET programs throughout the state. Local programs continually work to develop IET programs that are aligned with student interests and regional workforce needs. Relationships with community partners and local businesses are critical in designing and implementing these relevant IET programs. WIOA adult education providers keep updated contact information for all partners they work with in their regional area and strive to expand partnerships each program year. At the end of the program year, partners are asked to complete a survey to evaluate knowledge of and services provided by WIOA adult education providers. Survey results allow the state and local providers to gauge satisfaction, make necessary improvements, and/or tailor services in their regional area.

The state recognizes the need to expand and strengthen existing components of career pathway instruction provided by all local adult education programs. The state continues to use the statewide career pathway curriculum via Montana Career Information System (MCIS) and our web-based math and English curriculum, EdReady. EdReady allows teachers to develop and use a variety of instructional strategies for lessons within this learning platform. MCIS is a robust career-planning tool that motivates students to think about their next steps beyond adult education and engages them in thoughtful short- and long-term planning for further education and job attainment. Teachers integrate these materials and learning activities into existing career counseling activities. The use of MCIS and EdReady creates a systemic approach to adult education instruction across programs. In addition, the state includes components relevant to career pathways during fall and spring meetings and adult education staff have opportunities to network and learn from colleagues throughout the state. In general, teachers across the state use a variety of resources to positively influence student retention, high school equivalency attainment, and preparedness for postsecondary education and training. The state has also created an IET work group that meets regularly to focus efforts on IET program development, resources, and best practices.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has been challenging for Montana, just as it has been for other areas of the nation. WIOA adult education providers have expanded their educational services to include a variety of virtual delivery modalities. Programs have continued to operate at a reduced capacity, virtually, or in a hybrid fashion. The state continues to see an increase in requests to approve additional distance learning platforms and programs are now able to assess students virtually using TABE and/or informal assessments. Programs have strived to become more innovative and creative to serve students via Zoom, Google, telephone, etc. Some local program staff members have gone into the homes of students to get technology setups established and/or have options for students to check out tablets, etc.

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

The state determined that an essential element of a high-quality professional development program was the need to establish rules regarding required hours for professional development and the ability to track teacher participation. Therefore, the state developed policy language for a professional development tracking component that is included in the data management system. The state policies were updated, as this gives the state the ability to analyze teacher participation in professional development and its impact on student outcomes. All programs are expected to participate in state sponsored professional development activities, such as monthly meetings and bi-annual conferences, as well as required to seek out other professional development opportunities that align with their specific needs.

The state regularly elicits feedback from teachers and other program staff to generate an understanding from their perspective on what is meaningful to support high-quality professional development offerings. The state encourages staff reflection and opportunities via collaborative meetings and field surveys to identify critical professional development needs. The state takes recommendations from the field that may lead to professional development activities for the dissemination of information and promising best practices. Ultimately, the state is committed to offering professional development opportunities that will meet the learning needs of diverse adult students.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, annual meetings sponsored by the state were held virtually via Zoom. The positive feedback given from program staff was astounding. Programs appreciated being able to keep their programs operating, while also being able to attend professional development activities. The flexible agenda allowed a variety of program staff to attend the most applicable sessions. The virtual delivery saved programs significant travel expenses and resulted in overall increased participation by staff across all programs. The state plans to continue utilizing virtual delivery for future meetings and professional development activities, as it was extremely well received. In addition, the state always encourages collaboration and the sharing of best practices or resources between programs. Collaboration between WIOA adult education programs is recorded on monthly reports and is reviewed by state staff. These efforts are then recorded on an engagement rubric that ties into the state's performance-based funding formula. Participation in state sponsored meetings is also recorded on the rubric and reflected in the funding formula. The state hopes this will elicit teamwork and increase outcomes across all programs.

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

State staff provided technical assistance to local programs as needed. State staff continually analyzed data, fielded questions/inquiries, and disseminated pertinent information to adult education providers. Technical assistance came after monthly desk audits of program data and performance or was determined and provided as needed on a case-by-case basis. Also, LiteracyPro, the state's data management system support staff helped programs understand NRS reporting rules. Zoom has allowed state staff to meet with local program staff, observe virtual classrooms, and engage in collaborative discussions with colleagues throughout the state. In addition, the state staff worked to develop a Google Website for WIOA adult education providers. This site is a common place to share applicable resources and collaborate with colleagues statewide. It continues to evolve and become more robust.

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

During the 2020-2021 year, each program was monitored via desk audits and monthly reports. Regularly scheduled desk audits ensured that data was accurate and that programs satisfied grant requirements. Desk audits also helped programs maintain compliance with federal and state rules and allowed the state to find areas of deficit within individual programs. Monthly report submissions were mandatory for all programs. These reports had two sections, data analysis and a partner collaboration/activity log. The data analysis section required programs to report and analyze data on the gains for each educational functioning level, the number of students exited, the number of students post-tested, total attendance hours, and the number of high school equivalency completers. The data section also provided an opportunity for programs to visualize progress between consecutive years. A component was built-in for quarterly reflection on data goals, and to help programs stay on track to meet or exceed a 10% increase in general performance measures. The partner collaboration/activity log section documented the programs ongoing work with agency partners to support their career pathway integration and coordination of services. Programs were required to report on all monthly activities with current partners and identify new partner meetings and activities. In addition, it was required that programs report on the outcome, or anticipated outcome, with the partner. The partner collaboration/activity log also required that the programs document ongoing strategies for increasing educational gains and specify what recruitment activities were completed throughout the month. The partner collaboration/activity log will become the basis for identifying models of promising practices.

State staff also worked to revise the processes for the next WIOA Title II Adult Education Request for Proposal (RFP) competition – scheduled for spring 2022. All RFP documents were updated with concise language and clearly defined expectations. The upcoming competition will guide ongoing efforts to monitor local programs either onsite or virtually. The state has always encouraged peer monitoring, onsite or virtually, as well. Programs visit and observe other programs to glean new information and resources to implement. Local programs find this activity meaningful and beneficial, and it has fostered a statewide team approach. As mentioned previously, the state was able to observe virtual classrooms and activities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Ultimately, the state is confident that future virtual monitoring visits will continue to be manageable and successful. The state also hopes to work on updating monitoring processes, after the upcoming RFP competition, to better align with federal monitoring requirements.

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

Other activities supported by leadership dollars included: state sponsored fall and spring conferences, distribution of pertinent information, assessment training, purchase of distance learning curriculum or educational materials, and monthly “shop talks” for program directors. It is important to note that a significant portion of the state leadership funding is used to completely cover the cost of LACES, the data management system, for all WIOA adult education programs. Local programs and the state continue to be highly impressed with the robust data management system itself as well as the support/training received from LiteracyPro personnel. Because LACES is so costly, in relation to overall leadership funding Montana has available, other state leadership expenditures and opportunities are limited. However, transitioning to this robust and accurate data management system has been an extremely beneficial change for WIOA adult education programs in Montana.

**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**.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on Montana’s WIOA adult education services and overall performance for the 2020-2021 program year. Programs have continued to implement distant learning initiatives, utilize virtual classrooms, and adjust program procedures to coincide with the overall shift to an increased virtual presence and workforce. Outreach via phone, e-mail, and text message remains common. Programs remain focused on diligent efforts to provide client support and continued service.

Montana primarily served WIOA adult education students in-person prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Although all programs have opened back up, some with reduced class sizes and COVID-19 specific restrictions, most programs are utilizing both in-person and online modalities. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has forced programs to navigate and explore new services, utilize distance learning platforms, and hold classes virtually. Programs have viewed this as an opportunity to expand services to individuals who may be geographically distant or hesitant to pursue in-person services – another great tool in the toolbox.

Most HiSET test centers operated during the 2020-2021 program year. Staff turnover at HiSET test centers was unusually high, resulting in gaps in service in some regional areas. Test centers continued to restrict the number of students allowed in testing rooms per social distancing guidelines, and there were long wait times for some individuals for a HiSET testing seat to become available. The remote proctored option, HiSET at Home, experienced an increase in popularity. The HiSET at Home exam provided those hesitant to test at a public test center, due to COVID-19 or other reasons, an opportunity to earn a high school equivalency. The option also reduced the burden of travel for individuals who did not reside near a test center.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continued, the state reflected on the impact of the evolving landscape of adult education. It appears that programs have started to rebound, adapt, and evolve since the beginning of the pandemic.

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|  | **4/1/2020** | **4/1/2021** | **6/1/2020** | **6/1/2021** | **6/30/2020** | **6/30/2021** |
| **Total enrolled** | 1483 | 1287 | 1543 | 1532 | 1575 | 1595 |
| **Attendance hours** | 104,033 | 88,734 | 117,441 | 114,928 | 123,119 | 122,498 |
| **EFL gains** | 282 | 267 | 321 | 326 | 361 | 342 |
| **HSE gains** | 227 | 197 | 243 | 319 | 289 | 391 |
| **Separated no MSG** | 304 | 221 | 552 | 316 | 589 | 420 |
| **% of POPS with MSG** | 34% | 35.8% | 36.40% | 41.9% | 41.20% | 51.18% |

* 2019-2020 final enrollment count – 1575 students
* 2020-2021 final enrollment count – 1595 students
* 2019-2020 distance education count – 19 students (974 instruction hours)
* 2020-2021 distance education count –143 students (26,115 instruction hours)
* 2019-2020 increased total enrollment from late March to end of program year – 92 people
* 2020-2021 increased total enrollment from late March to end of program year – 308 people
* 2019-2020 total attendance hours – 123,199
* 2020-2021 total attendance hours – 122,498
* 2019-2020 increased number EFL gains from late March to end of program year – 79
* 2020-2021 increased number EFL gains from late March to end of program year – 75
* 2019-2020 increased the numbers of HSE gains from late March to end of program year – 62
* 2020-2021 increased the numbers of HSE gains from late March to end of program year – 194
* 2019-2020 percentage of POPs with MSG total change from late March to end of program year – 7% increase
* 2020-2021 percentage of POPs with MSG total change from late March to end of program year – 15% increase

**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 Montana Adult Education State Director is a member of the State Workforce Innovation Board (SWIB) and serves on the WIOA Committee for this board. In this capacity, the state director is directly involved in all one-stop discussions and decisions at the state level. This provides an opportunity to share the perspective of adult education in one-stop agenda topics and action items. Although the COVID-19 pandemic affected in-person events, the SWIB was able to continue meeting virtually.

The state continues to work collaboratively with the other core partners to provide one-stop services in each of our 12 Montana Association of County (MACO) Districts. Through a variety of meetings, representatives from each core partner agency continue to utilize the WIOA Collaborative Agreement previously developed which describes the overarching one-stop mission. The agreement covers integrating core partnerships, a proposed service delivery model, the role of the community management team, and outreach to employers. The collaborative agreement has been sent to core partner staff working in each MACO District to guide them in delivering one-stop services. This agreement is the foundation for future core partner meetings and discussions of services. Also, at the beginning of the 2017-2018 program year, an initial MOU regarding the infrastructure costs was initiated, drafted, and signed by core partner agencies. It is important to note that Montana operates under a single workforce board, and Montana Department of Labor and Industry is the lead WIOA agency.  All WIOA partners signed an MOU regarding one-stop services.  WIOA adult education programs are not co-located, but are required to pay for phone, internet, etc. as direct linkage to make sure they are available to WIOA partners and clients. The MOU continues to be utilized, evaluated, and renewed as necessary.

The WIOA Title II Adult Education RFP competition in spring 2017, required all eligible providers to respond to specific questions documenting how they would be responsible for meeting the one-stop requirements that the state would delegate to them. The eligible providers were asked to provide basic, individual, and follow-up career services. Basic services include a wide range of services from assessment to referrals to other programs and community partners. All adult education teachers have completed activities on accessing and understanding labor market data; all teachers have a working knowledge of labor market data that will be essential for delivering the career services. In Montana’s WIOA State Plan, all core partners committed to use of the Montana Career Information System (MCIS) to provide individualized career services. All WIOA clients will set up a career portfolio that can be seamlessly transferred from one agency to another. The portfolio includes skill inventories, specialized career path assessments, and short- and long-term employment goals that are relevant for the client’s chosen career pathway. This statewide systemic approach will provide clients with streamlined career services with no duplication of activities to be completed. Regardless of the core partner that begins the individual career services, the client can be assured that all planning and information will be readily available to all agencies who are providing core partner services. WIOA adult education providers meet with core partners such as Job Service or Vocational Rehabilitation, as well as other community partners, in their regional area multiple times throughout the program year. As mentioned previously, state staff worked to revise the processes for the next WIOA Title II Adult Education RFP competition – scheduled for spring 2022. All RFP documents were updated and will require continued collaboration between WIOA partners and capability to provide one-stop responsibilities.

**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.**

As result of the WIOA Title II Adult Education RFP competition in spring 2017, two providers were awarded the IELCE funds for the 2017-2018 program year. Extension plans were required for subsequent years. The next WIOA Title II Adult Education RFP competition is scheduled for spring 2022.

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

To understand the IELCE requirement and provide services under WIOA, the state was in continuous contact with the two IELCE providers. The purpose was to assist those two local programs and English language learner (ELL) teachers in developing an understanding of how they could expand their existing efforts to provide required IELCE services. The following MCIS modules are utilized with ELL students: Exploring MCIS, Student Skills Inventories and Interest Profiler, Exploring Occupations, and Researching Education and Training. The two IELCE providers are among the largest and most successful programs in the state. Their personnel are highly qualified and effective when working with this population of adult learners.

Over the past program year, the ELL teachers have been participants in all state sponsored workshops. Their participation allowed them to work with other adult education teachers in the creation of standards-based lesson plans and contextualized learning plans. This participation provided them the opportunity to see the planning required to prepare students for secondary credential attainment or transition to postsecondary education, training, and employment.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, IELCE programs continue to adapt and evolve. One of the IELCE providers transitioned the entire IELCE program to a virtual delivery modality and the other IELCE provider ensured their ELL students had access to technology and distance learning options by visiting their homes to help with initial setup.

During the 2020-2021 program year, one of the state’s IELCE providers participated in and completed the Student Achievement in Reading (STAR), a rigorous national training cohort. They began piloting STAR assessments and instructional strategies in their ELL classrooms, and experienced success with increased student outcomes. Some of the program’s teachers will become certified STAR trainers for Montana.

* **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.**

The state previously sent an ELL lead teacher to participate in a three-day Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) training presented by Miriam Burt. The teacher returned to Montana as a certified trainer to share cutting edge strategies on how to incorporate workforce strategies into the ESOL classroom. The strategies were based on the College and Career Readiness (CCR) standards with a focus on integration that connects reading, writing, and vocabulary using workplace situations. Additionally, there was a focus on soft skills, so students have a cultural basis for reading exercises and workplace information.

That ELL lead teacher remains a strong and reliable resource for other ELL teachers throughout the state. She also continues to serve as the certified trainer for Best Plus and other ELL related trainings. She provided a BEST Plus training in August 2020. In addition, she leads ELL work groups and supports ELL activities throughout the state.

The following are some 2020-2021 highlights from one of the state’s IELCE providers – Great Falls College and Career Readiness Center:

* Contextualization
  + All experiences and knowledge acquired are integrated and related to the workplace with the intent of success.
  + Partnerships with local business that employ IECLE students.
* Connections Class
  + Former IELCE students are guest speakers who share successes and experiences with current students. (Examples: volunteering, internships, resumes)
* Naturalization
  + Government/History of the U.S.
  + Vocabulary Form N-400
  + Simulation of the interview
  + Individual support (privacy)
* Student Empowerment
* Collaboration between IELCE teacher and students.
* Student forums for constructive feedback and praise.
* Students are given decision-making power (Example: choose a book)
* IELCE students share technology knowledge with teacher
* Technology
* Improves collaboration
* Incorporates difference learning styles
* Connects teacher with students
* Helps prepare students for the digital future
* Helps students learn at their own pace
* Project Basic Learning
  + What am I good at? (Examples: volunteerism, recipe, holiday, biography/book projects)

It is important to note that Burlington English reached out to Great Falls College and Career Reading Center regarding best practice. They were so impressed with the number of hours the IELCE teacher is able to get in to keep IELCE students engaged in distance learning. Burlington English is a tool that depends on the expertise of the instructor. Being able to integrate and differentiate the learning process with students using a blend of tools, modalities, and projects is a gift this particular IELCE teacher possesses.  For a vendor to reach out, for a best practice example of using their product, is a true testament to the teacher.

* **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.**

MCIS, which the ELL teachers have been trained to use with their students, provides the current Montana workforce information. This gives the teachers updated labor market data and workforce information for the state. The state previously contracted with a lead teacher to build an adult/ELL student checklist within the MCIS system. Through this customization, the teachers can integrate relevant workforce activities into their instructional practices. The state IET work group has plans to create specific MCIS training for new adult education program staff.

The following are some 2020-2021 highlights from one of the state’s IELCE providers – Missoula County Public School’s Academic Success Program:

**Remote ESOL Promising Practices project**

Missoula County Public School’s (MCPS) Academic Success Program (ASP) was selected to participate in World Education, Inc.’s Remote English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL) Promising Practices Project. The intent of the Promising Practices Project was to develop case studies of remote ESOL programs as well as clusters of promising practices from multiple programs.  MCPS ASP was interviewed because of their success serving ESOL students at all language levels virtually. MCPS ASP was included in the final publication *Creating Equitable Access to Adult ESOL and Supports in Multiple Contexts and for Distinct Populations and Purposes.*

**Workforce Training Developed/Adapted**

MCPS ASP was approached by the International Rescue Committee and Little Twigs Child Care Program to help employees with limited English proficiency complete the training required to work in a Licensed Child Care Setting. They worked with DPHHS Quality Assurance Division (QAD) and the local Child Care Resource and Referral Agency to gain approval to develop in-person classes covering the content from the required on-line courses. Three classes were developed, and eight students participated in one or more classes.

* New Staff Health and Safety - 30 hours
* Infant Safety Essentials - 8 hours
* Together We Grow - 20 hours

“Together We Grow” was taught in English with Swahili and Arabic interpreters.  The other two classes were taught in English as well with a Swahili interpreter.

**Supported Training**

MCPS ASP provided additional opportunities for supported training to assist ten ELLs with completing required training/certification for work.

* **Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)** - two students received individualized training to assist with understanding content needed to pass the written and clinical skills examination.
* **Community Interpreter** - two students received individual support to complete a 40-hour online Community Interpreter training.
* **First Aid and CPR** - Five students participated in an adapted Infant/Child First Aid and CPR course to ensure understanding of the content and ability to pass the test required to receive certification.
* **ServSafe** - one student received individualized training to assist with understanding the content needed to pass the ServSafe Manager certification exam.

**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 Montana Board of Public Education, upon recommendation from the Superintendent of Public Instruction, adopted the Montana Content Standards for English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics, on November 4, 2011. These standards, along with Science standards adopted in 2016, ensure that secondary students have the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in the 21st century economy.  Skills include problem-solving, critical thinking, communication, teamwork, research, and the use of technology.

In February 2015, the Adult Education (AE) Unit at the Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) adopted the College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards for adult education. These standards identify the essential CCR components required to be incorporated into the adult education classroom. By adopting these standards, Montana’s adult education programs will have student expectations that are consistent with K-12 students. Additionally, programs will have access to K-12 tools and materials that support student learning.

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

The state previously sent two adult education lead teachers and a professional development coordinator to the OCTAE 2016 CCR Standards Implementation Institute. The team brought the information back to adult education and ELL teachers by presenting a two-day Summer Institute that gave participants the occasion to delve deeply into the standards to understand key advances in their content areas. These individuals still serve as valuable resources for the other adult education teachers throughout the state. In addition, one of these teachers worked diligently to create an online course specifically for mathematic standards in adult education during the 2018-2019 program year. This online professional development course is available for adult educators in our state, free of charge. It is important to note that enrollment in online professional development courses increased with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

**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.**

The Montana Department of Corrections follows the Association of State Correctional Administrator’s (ASCA) definition of recidivism.

Recidivism rate– the rate at which adult offenders return to prison in Montana for any reason within three years of their release from prison. Each release can have only one corresponding return.

Given this definition, we would need to wait three full years before we could calculate a recidivism rate. With a 6/30/2021 end date, a recidivism rate for this group participants would not be available until sometime after 6/30/2024.

Some general statistics provided by our WIOA adult education corrections program housed at the Montana State Prison:

* 68% of all inmates coming into Montana State Prison do not have a verifiable high school education.
* 78% of those incoming inmates complete the HiSET and move on to jobs, postsecondary education or training programs inside the prison or in the community within 18-24 months.

The most current recidivism rates available via the Montana Department of Corrections 2021 Biennial Report (most current report available):

* 2015 – Male Three Year Prison Recidivism Rate
  + Total Recidivism Rate – 38.6%
  + Violation – 33.7%
  + New Crime – 4.9%
* 2015 – Female Three Year Prison Recidivism Rate
  + Total Recidivism Rate – 24.4%
  + Violation – 21.9%
  + New Crime – 2.5%
* 2016 – Male Three Year Prison Recidivism Rate
  + Total Recidivism Rate – 38.2%
  + Violation – 31.0%
  + New Crime – 7.1%
* 2016 – Female Three Year Prison Recidivism Rate
  + Total Recidivism Rate – 27.9%
  + Violation – 20.8%
  + New Crime – 7.1%
* 2017 – Male Three Year Prison Recidivism Rate
  + Total Recidivism Rate – 39.5%
  + Violation – 27.3%
  + New Crime – 12.2%
* 2017 – Female Three Year Prison Recidivism Rate
  + Total Recidivism Rate – 32.2%
  + Violation – 24.5%
  + New Crime – 7.7%

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, adult education services and HiSET testing has been more limited in correctional facilities. These facilities worked hard to keep everyone safe and limit the spread during the continued COVID-19 pandemic. They did not allow inmates from different units to co-mingle which impacted programs greatly in terms of instruction and assessments. Some correctional institutions have continued with the transition to tablets, distance learning platforms, and computer-based assessments when applicable. However, technology access in a correctional setting is limited for inmates even for educational purposes. The Montana Department of Corrections has transitioned some services to make education more equitable for all. They are working closely with Department of Labor and Industry to bring more pre-apprenticeships programs and career readiness programs to all correctional facilities in Montana, as well as working closely with Job Service and employers. In addition, Montana State Prison applied to become a Pell Grant pilot state/institution and will know soon if this was approved. If approved, it will help incarcerated individuals with funding for postsecondary education.