South Carolina Department of Education

**Office of Adult Education**

# Annual Performance Report

# South Carolina Narrative Report 2020-2021

**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).**
* **Establishment or operation of high-quality professional development programs as described in section 223(1) (b).**
* **Provision of technical assistance to funded eligible providers as described in section 223(1) (c).**
* **Monitoring and evaluation of the quality and improvement of adult education activities as described in section 223(1) (d).**

Alignment of Adult Education and Literacy Activities

The South Carolina Department of Education’s (SCDE) Office of Adult Education (OAE) has used funds made available under section 223 to work diligently and collaboratively to align adult education and literacy activities with core and required one-stop partners in the following ways:

During FY 2020-21, OAE staff continued to review and provide support to local adult education programs in their efforts to develop fully executed MOUs and infrastructure funding agreements for all twelve local workforce development areas. The OAE assisted programs in the negotiation process and provided guidance on services that can be rendered and received through the one-stop system. Office staff also worked to ensure that one-stop infrastructure costs were distributed fairly.

OAE staff continues to work with 12 local Adult Education Directors (one from each of the 12 local workforce areas) identified as Workforce Liaisons. The Workforce Liaisons are members of their respective Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB). Meetings between this group and OAE staff were held to keep the OAE apprised of LWDB activity and plans, in order to improve the services being provided to individuals in SC, and to determine where workplace literacy activity may be needed to assist employers.

The OAE continues to participate in collaborative planning activities and workgroups comprised of representatives from each of the core partners identified in the State Combined Plan. During PY 20, OAE worked with SCDEW and other state partners to address employer needs for job retention surrounding essential soft skills. During these meetings core program providers agreed on a set of essential soft skills and measurement criteria needed to develop and market a SC Soft Skills credential that is recognized by employers in the state. The activities and services related to essential soft skills training and a state-recognized credential help to support employer and jobseeker needs. By aligning with this initiative, OAE hopes to improve WIOA employment outcomes for individuals served by Title II participants and individuals who are co-enrolled in Title I, Title III, and Title IV programs. The Office of Adult Education also helped to support the alignment of adult education programs and services with WIOA Title I and III through employer engagement and services meetings. OAE collected data from local programs on appropriate adult education services that support employer needs. The data was used report data for WIOA Performance Measure 6: Effectiveness in Serving Employers. Adult education providers served 566 employers during the 2020-21 PY. During PY 2020, the OAE worked with SC Department of Employment and Workforce and Workforce System Operators to facilitate enrollment of local frontline staff into the SC Works 101 cross-training program. It is designed to equip staff working in the centers, or in the field, who provide services to jobseekers or businesses, with knowledge and understanding of the SC Works system to ensure that customers receive high-quality services each time they engage with the system. The training initiative is a collaborative effort to development a strong unified partner referral process. The SC Works 101 course is delivered in partnership with Midlands Technical College. In PY 2020, 10 adult education providers from eight of the 12 SC Workforce Development Regions completed the training program. To date, 48 adult education providers have completed the SC Works 101 course.

The OAE continued its effort to develop and be a part of partnership efforts to establish career pathways that provide access to employment and training services for individuals in adult education and literacy activities. During PY 20, the OAE provided training to local adult education programs on career pathways. OAE provided technical assistance in the development of IET programs. OAE also worked to create links to existing career pathways through a partnership with SC Technical College System (SCTCS), Apprenticeship Carolina Division. In this partnership, OAE and SCTCS worked to identify common elements of IET programs and the development of pre-apprenticeships to support adult education student enrollment into Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs). OAE is a primary partner in three DOL grants for RAPs with SCTCS Apprenticeship Carolina Division- SC Youth Apprenticeship Readiness Initiative Grant, and State Apprenticeship Expansion Grant. The grant activities include the development or expansion of career pathways in the Health Care, Manufacturing, and Information Technology industries which targeted the development of RAPs in three SC high-demand Workforce Development Regions and the provision of support services to individual participants and business affected by COVID closures. OAE activities in the Apprenticeship grants include the development of Apprenticeship Councils in three Workforce Development Regions and the alignment of WIOA, OAE, DOL and SCTCS policies to create greater access to RAPs for adult education participants and to support students in the completion of RAPs. Local programs are monitored on the development of their career pathways and are required to outline or describe their plan for developing a career pathway as a part of the request for proposal/competitive grant award. OAE uses the LACES database to monitor local career pathway activities using College and Career Navigator Accountability Report (CNAR) codes.

The OAE sustained a collaborative effort with the South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Department, a core WIOA partner, to provide Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) preparation classes and skill-building classes at 23 VR training centers or adult education sites around the state. During the COVID Pandemic, adult education programs also provided students with free access to online CRC prep using the Worldwide Interactive Network (WIN) Learning Ready to Work Courseware. As a part of the partnership, Adult Education offered instruction in preparation for earning the CRC. During the 2020-21 PY, 170 students attended CRC preparation and skill-building classes at VR adult education sites, or through WIN Distance Education software. Of the total population served, 60%of participants achieved a Silver or higher CRC level, 23% achieved at least one educational functioning level gain, and approximately 2% earned a secondary credential.

Another successful partnership is with the South Carolina Department of Social Services (SCDSS). SCDSS administers the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training (E & T) initiative. The OAE signed an updated MOU with SCDSS in summer 2020. This MOU, which provides additional funds from SCDSS, allows local adult education providers to expand adult education services.

In addition, the Director of the OAE serves as a member of the State Workforce Development Board and career pathway development workgroup committee member. His participation on the state board further facilitates alignment of adult education and literacy activities with other required one-stop partners. Both the State Board and workgroup subcommittee members meet on a quarterly basis.

High Quality Professional Development

The OAE continues its efforts to establish and provide high quality professional development to improve the instruction provided pursuant to local activities required under Section 231(b). Professional development opportunities included resources and strategies for transitioning to virtual instruction, the essential components of reading, instruction related to the specific needs of adult learners, and the dissemination of information about models and promising practices related to these programs.

The OAE used funds made available under section 223 to provide high quality professional development to support providers through the Adult Education Technical Assistance Network (TAN). The response to delivering professional development programs virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic was quickly coordinated throughout the state because of the organized TAN system. The OAE surveyed local programs prior to the governor’s order for statewide school closures to assess program needs and distance learning plans. The OAE continues to use feedback from surveys developed to provide information on virtual professional development activities that are needed to support instructors and local programs. Local adult education practitioners were also encouraged to utilize national professional development resources such as the Coalition for Adult Basic Education (COABE), the Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCS), and WorkforceGPS.

The OAE continues to develop webinars and virtual trainings as an ongoing means to inform, train, and support adult education programs. The goals of these professional development activities were to:

1. provide instructors with resources and strategies for transitioning to virtual instruction
2. reiterate and clarify adult education policies, procedures and guidelines,
3. provide answers to questions from adult education practitioners,
4. strengthen the implementation of adult education, and
5. present new and innovative information that affects adult education programs.

Statewide training opportunities are offered annually during the spring and fall for both paid and volunteer adult education practitioners. These training institutes are a platform to inform adult education practitioners of priorities and changes and to educate them on new practices and tools. During PY 2020, professional development focused on distance learning resources and strategies, WIOA, standards-based instruction, career pathways, digital literacy, math and reading instruction, workplace literacy, integrated education and training, and additional topics related to the specific needs of adult learners.

Graduate level courses are offered each summer as an additional learning opportunity for all adult education practitioners at low to no cost. The following six (6) courses were offered virtually during the 2021 SC Adult Education Summer Academy:

* Fundamentals of Adult Education: Program Development, Design and Implementation
* Digital Literacy in Adult Education
* ESL Academy I - Teaching English Literacy to Adult Learners
* Content Area Reading & Writing for Adult Educators
* Instructional Practices: Reading in Adult Education
* Global Career Development Facilitator

In addition to large scale professional development activities, small group and regional/local trainings, meetings, and webinars were provided to share information on national and local models and promising practices. Training will continue for local adult education and literacy providers using the many resources available locally, statewide, and nationally. OAE has worked to place a stronger emphasis to ensure that training and materials incorporate data- and research-based components.

Participants were surveyed after workshops, conference presentations, and training webinars to evaluate the activity/event for relevance and effectiveness. Survey results and feedback are used to plan future professional development activities and to ensure continuous improvement.

Technical Assistance to Funded Eligible Providers

The OAE used funds made available under section 223 to provide technical assistance to funded providers in the following ways:

Last school year, technical assistance was provided primarily through Microsoft Teams to both individual and groups of providers via Deep Dive sessions, statewide training sessions, regional meetings, and individual web meetings. Conference calls were also conducted. With input from OAE, regional trainings were conducted by the TAN staff. Local programs were notified of trainings via Training Calendar schedules that were created and disseminated by the OAE quarterly. The training calendar was organized to reflect the date, time and location of each training event, and included session criteria and intended audience. Interested participants registered for individual trainings through a professional development system utilized by OAE. In addition, OAE convened three required Statewide Director’s meetings during the course of PY 2020-21. These meetings were held to keep local AE Directors updated on information that could affect program policies, performance and partnerships.

Overall program performance is measured by the Desktop Monitoring Tool (DMT). Providers that perform at aggregate averages of less than 65% for Adult Basic Education (ABE) and/or English as a Second Language (ESL) enter an ITAP (Intensive Technical Assistance Program) process. The ITAP process includes onsite visits, individualized program staff training based on the deficiencies of the program, and the development and implementation of a program improvement plan. ITAP programs remain in the process until program performance improves to levels 65% and greater for both ABE and ESL students. This process was modified to meet WIOA performance requirements that could lead to sanctions.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Adult Education Activities

The OAE used funds made available under section 223 to monitor and evaluate funded providers in the following ways:

The State Director of Adult Education assigns a Compliance Monitoring Review (CMR) Team to formally monitor all school district programs and community-based organizations (CBO) receiving federal funds and/or state aid to support approved adult learning services once every four years.

The Compliance Monitoring Review (CMR) process is a systematic approach designed to assess the educational opportunities and the effectiveness of adult education programs and services in the school districts and CBO’s. One-fourth of the programs are reviewed each year by a team of OAE staff. The other three-fourths of the programs are informally reviewed by desktop monitoring tools and informal site visits. To be successful, the CMR effort requires continuous follow-up and support activities including professional development and on-site technical assistance. Because of the COVID 19 pandemic, the formal review process was modified to include both virtual and in-person processes. The updated process includes an onsite record and attendance review.

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

The OAE used funds for permissible activities to enhance the quality of programming in the adult education system. The permissible activities that were supported with federal leadership funds included:

* The SC Adult Education Technical Assistance Network (TAN). The TAN, in collaboration with the OAE, developed and provided training to adult education practitioners on various adult education-related practices and models that support program development and instruction. Professional development activities through the TAN focused on instructional strategies and resources, integrated education and training, and career pathways.
* Graduate Level Courses. The OAE used federal leadership funds to develop and execute graduate level college courses, for adult education practitioners. The OAE plans to add additional course offerings mainly in the area of digital literacy to support state level active around a newly created SC Soft Skills Certificate.
* Standards. The OAE continues to provide training on the use and implementation of the College and Career Ready standards, and SC Adult English Language Proficiency Standards, which also align with the state’s K-12 standards and the OCTAE standards.
* Distance Education. In response to school closings due to COVID-19, and the accumulation of portable technology such as tablets and laptops used by students in PY 2019-20, the OAE did research during 2020-21 and is planning to purchase distance education packages and a learning management system that will hold curriculum based on College and Career Ready standards. This curriculum will support GED preparation and high school diploma completion. The OAE also plans to purchase software that supports digital literacy training for use by local adult education providers.
* Transition Services. The OAE continued to provide career and transition service training to local College and Career Navigators.
* Although the lack of virtual occupational training slowed IET progress from PY 2019-20, the OAE staff continues to work with local programs to develop IET programs that meet the requirements as set forth by WIOA legislation. There are currently more than 50 approved IETs, with more than 350 participants.

**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 OAE formally and informally assesses each local program throughout the year via Desktop Monitoring, subgrant Interim and Final Reports, Compliance Monitoring, and a variety of informal data reviews via the state’s data management system, LACES.

The Desktop Monitoring Tool (DMT) is a quarterly report that ensures that collects data from NRS Tables, as well as secondary credentials and Career Readiness Certificates (CRC). Each local program completes and submits a quarterly DMT. At the end of each year, a program overview report is completed at the state level using the DMT data. This report provides a snapshot of each local program and assists the state with developing goals for the next year by identifying promising practices and professional development and technical assistance needs for the coming year.

All programs receiving federal subgrant(s)—Adult Education, Generational Family Services, Corrections Education and Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IEL/CE) grants—completed an Interim Report and a year-end Final Annual Report, designed specifically for each grant. Data from these reports guide specific technical assistance delivery for programs receiving this grant.

In addition to the DMT and subgrant reports, the OAE conducted data reviews in order to identify areas of strength and weakness. A report is generated that analyzes all TABE pre- and post-tests. The analysis identifies on which test levels for each NRS Level students are achieving EFL gains and which are in need of improvement. This analysis also allows the OAE to identify irregularities in test administration and violations of the Assessment Policy. A local program and statewide report was prepared that identifies the percentage of students in each program who agreed to data match along with the NRS Table 5 outcomes for each program. The NRS Table 5 analysis was used to determine if any correlation existed between the percentage of students who agreed to data match and the Q2 and Q4 employment outcomes. Data reviews were also conducted at least quarterly on the young adult population (YAP) in order to monitor performance and retention/completion rates.

Based on the assessments of core programs, the SCDE - OAE sets four goals to determine the focus for each program year to meet the targets for measurable skill gains and core follow-up outcome indicators. Despite the ongoing effects that the COVID-19 pandemic had on the day-to-day operations of the local adult education programs, including a 71% decrease in participants compared to pre-pandemic levels, focusing on these goals assisted the local programs with streamlining their academic and career services and aligning the adult education and literacy activities with the SC One-Stop partners.

The 2020-2021 OAE Goals were to:

1. Strengthen distance education processes
2. Strengthen GED testing
3. Market and promote Skills Upgrade training
4. Expand services delivered through SC Works Comprehensive Sites

In support of the four goals, the processes of data collection, entry, and analysis were incorporated into all conversations with the local programs. Performance and outcome data was shared with local program Directors in order to guide conversations and processes toward data-driven decision making at the local level. Training efforts on data collection and entry were further increased.

**Goals Results**

1. Strengthen distance education processes
   1. Distance education opportunities increased exponentially statewide and distance education participants increased 72% from pre-pandemic (2018-2019) levels.
2. Strengthen GED testing
   1. Despite widespread closures, the percentage of participants completing a secondary credential increased 14%.
3. Market and promote Skills Upgrade training
   1. Integrated Education & Training and Workplace Literacy participants increased by 90% and 94% respectively
   2. Of the 398 Integrated Education and Training and Workplace Literacy participants in 2020-2021, 141 EFL gains were earned through the new MSG opportunities via passing a technical/occupational skills exam or progress toward milestones.
   3. Services provided to employers increased 50%
4. Expand services delivered through SC Works Comprehensive Sites
   1. The OAE continues to oversee a pilot process that placed two College and Career Navigators (CCN) at SC Works Comprehensive Sites. These CCNs are in place to align adult education services with other core partners. Duties included in this alignment are: TABE testing, career pathway development, and navigating the public to appropriate local partners who come to comprehensive sites seeking employment help.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2018-2019 | 2019-2020 | 2020-2021 | % Change from Pre-Pandemic Levels (2018-2019) |
| NRS Participants | 19276 | 16019 | 11295 | -71% |
| Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit | 35% | 36.49% | 29.23% | -18% |
| Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit | $2,650 | $2,500 | $3,330 | 20% |
| Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit | 32% | 36.58% | 27.23% | -17% |
| Credential Attainment | 21% | 39.46% | 40.29% | 49% |
| Measurable Skill Gains | 44% | 35.90% | 39.63% | -11% |
| Effectiveness in Serving Employers | 285 | 411 | 566 | 50% |
| % of Secondary Credential Completers | 20% | 18% | 23% | 14% |
| Integrated Education & Training Participants | 14 | 213 | 141 | 90% |
| Workplace Literacy Participants | 16 | 99 | 257 | 94% |

For the 2021-2022 program year, the state plans to continue the use of Desktop Monitoring, the subgrant Interim and Final Reports, Compliance Monitoring, and a variety of informal data reviews via the state’s data management system, LACES. In addition, the state plans to implement informal compliance monitoring for each program not formally monitored, and to increase the support and training provided for data collection, entry, and analysis.

The state’s 2021-2022 goals are to:

1. Strengthen Distance Education through career services
2. Market and promote the GED by 23 Initiative in partnership with the SC Technical College System
3. Advance workplace literacy opportunities and services
4. Create awareness of Integrated Education and Training (IET) among students and partners

**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 Office of Adult Education delegates its required one-stop responsibility to local adult education providers. Within applications during the request for proposal that occurs every four years, local providers are asked to share how they planned to carry out one-stop responsibilities. Current services provided include TABE testing for potential adult education participants, and for job placement through the one-stop system. Other services provided by local adult education providers are as follows:

* Basic skills and literacy assessments and training
* Workforce preparation and career readiness activities
* Orientation to information and other services available through the one-stop delivery system; partner referrals
* Financial aid assistance for training and education programs not provided under WIOA
* Labor exchange services
* Provision of labor market information
* Provision of information relating to the availability of supportive services or assistance and appropriate referrals to those services and assistance
* Individualized and group career services

Each TAN has two to four one-stop comprehensive sites in each training area. The OAE looks to improve its current process by placing a full-time CCN in each TAN to perform necessary tasks for the OAE. With oversight from the OAE, the CCN will be placed in a local program and will operate as a lead CCN in the training area. CCN tasks will include providing training and technical support to local CCNs. They will also provide guidance for connecting potential adult education student to the appropriate adult education center, and to start the development of a career pathway to one of the IETs that are required to be developed in each workforce area by local adult education providers, in employment need areas only.

OAE staff continues to attend local workforce development area Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) and infrastructure funding agreement (IFA) meetings to assist programs in the negotiation process, and to work with local adult education directors who are members of their respective local workforce development board to disperse important information gathered from board meetings. Programs are using a portion of their five percent administrative fund to contribute to the infrastructure costs of the one-stops in their local workforce development areas. The local workforce development boards have been willing to negotiate and keep costs at a minimum for adult education programs considering the limited administrative funds available to adult education programs. The Office of Adult Education has made state funding available to support local adult education programs where one-stop infrastructure costs create a financial burden; however, to date, no local adult education programs have requested state funding support.

**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 SC OAE, in collaboration with the SCDE Grants Program and General Counsel, created and distributed a second IEL/CE Request for Proposals (RFP) to select 12 subgrantees statewide to award funds allocated to the state by the federal IEL/CE grant. The competition was held in the spring of 2021. Comprehensive trainings were held for potential applicants and selected reviewers. All applicants were required to demonstrate program effectiveness and respond to questions related to the thirteen considerations listed in WIOA, Title 2. It was necessary to hold two rounds of competition to achieve geographic equity in the distribution of funds (this second round was held in Fall 2021). The grant application and review process culminated in awarding funds to one program in each of the twelve Workforce Development areas located in South Carolina. This grant cycle will continue for four years, ending June 30, 2025.

Grant monies totaling $348,667.54, including reverted funds from PY 2019-20, were awarded to twelve programs for fiscal year 2020-21, which included 10 school district programs and two literacy associations benefitting directly from the grant. Awards ranged from $22,544.58 to $35,375.30, with amounts based primarily on grant review scores, the previous year’s size of ESL population, performance, and student retention.

Programs receiving IEL/CE grants directly served 1628 students with the IEL/CE funds, with 1279 of these students attending 12 hours or more. Of these 1279 IEL/CE students, eleven (11) received high school credentials and 19 earned Career Readiness Certificates (CRCs). The number of CRCs was down significantly from 2019-20, possibly due to limitations to in-person instruction and CRC testing. 109 IEL/CE students actively participated in ABE classes. 48.71% of IEL/CE students achieved a measurable skill gain, which exceeded the state goal of 45%. 18.3% of IEL/CE students had entered employment by the end of the second quarter with median earnings of $5687.50. We anticipate that this employment data will improve as individuals return to work after the COVID crisis diminishes.

During PY 2020-21, IEL/CE programs continued to develop new and locally relevant IET programs, with assistance from the SCDE-OAE. Local program staff met with OAE staff to refine IET proposals to ensure alignment with WIOA goals for these programs. IEL/CE programs with approved IETs implemented these programs in the areas of manufacturing, healthcare, hospitality, construction and entrepreneurship, all of which align with identified local and/or state employment needs. The Workforce Liaisons (mentioned in Section 1 of this report) met with and assisted the local programs with identifying the employment needs in their respective areas. During PY 2020-21, 26 IEL/CE students participated in an IET program with 13 students attaining post-secondary credentials. Surprisingly, this number increased from last year, despite the restrictions placed on in-person instruction due to COVID; this increase may be attributed to more IET programs being approved and implemented during PY 2020-21. In addition, partnerships with local training providers have been strengthened which has resulted in more IET activity. As the country moves beyond the COVID 19 crisis, the SCDE-OAE expects the number of IET programs offered and IET program completers to increase. SC continues to struggle with the large number of undocumented individuals who participate in our programs; these individuals are not eligible to attend local technical colleges, which results in a portion of our Adult ELL population not having access to post-secondary training; due to their status, these students do not have the opportunity participate in IET programs that partner with technical colleges for occupational training.

The OAE ESL Consultant communicated with many of the adult education sites offering ESL services, including all of those awarded with IEL/CE grants, in order to offer Technical Assistance and to monitor the programs informally. Additionally, an IEL/CE Interim Report and Final Annual Report (IEL/CE FAR) were completed and submitted by each grant recipient. Both reports contained information on program performance and documented progress toward full implementation of the IEL/CE program, including IET and other occupational goals. These reports were reviewed, and technical assistance was delivered as needed. The OAE ESL Consultant and other state staff conducted multiple trainings for directors and ESL practitioners, both regionally and statewide, specifically directed at sharing information and strategies on the implementation of WIOA regulations as they relate to the Adult ESL population and IEL/CE. Specific technical assistance and training was delivered individually and at statewide meetings regarding individual program planning and implementation of an IET, with particular emphasis on the challenges presented by COVID. For IEL/CE programs not yet in the IET implementation phase, OAE staff provided information and technical assistance necessary to complete the process for submitting an IET proposal to the OAE for approval. Criteria for approval included:

* Alignment with identified local workforce needs as detailed in the Local Workforce Development Plan or local employer need.
* Contextual and concurrent English language instruction directly aligned with occupational training.
* Workforce preparation activities.
* Student attainment of a nationally recognized credential leading to self-sustaining employment.

Additionally, a database of South Carolina ESL practitioners was updated and used to disseminate information concerning all areas of IEL/CE grant implementation, instructional issues, upcoming trainings, and other communications unique and useful to this group of practitioners. In response to the COVID crisis, multiple training sessions were held to give local staff information and resources to provide instruction using virtual means, either synchronous or asynchronous. The expansion of the approved methods in which programs could count instructional hours toward post-testing greatly improved the continuity of instructional services for IEL/CE students. Asynchronous virtual English learning opportunities were also leveraged, including Rosetta Stone, USALearns and Schoology. Blended programs such as Burlington English further extended quality instruction to our Adult English language learners. Programs utilized conferencing platforms (Google Meets, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, etc.) to continue to provide synchronous instruction to their students by virtual means. A challenge faced by many IEL/CE programs was students’ limited access to technology, which hampered access to virtual instruction. Programs met this challenge by providing loaner devices, mifis and utilizing mobile friendly virtual platforms when possible.

Each IEL/CE program is required to have a College and Career Navigator (CCN) on staff to assist students in meeting their educational (secondary and post-secondary) and career goals. These staff members worked with students to identify career goals, introduce career pathways and to navigate various systems that would assist students to attain their goals. They were also integral in delivering workforce preparation activities to students. In addition, the CCNs assisted students in addressing barriers to participation in the IEL/CE program.

In attempts to meet the needs of the ESL population participating in IEL/CE programs, local programs implemented flexible scheduling which included class offerings (in-person and virtual) in the mornings, afternoons, evenings, and on weekends. The provision of transportation and childcare for in-person classes were often the effect of collaborative efforts between Adult Education and churches, as well as other community-based organizations. Volunteers provided essential assistance with individualized tutoring and small group instruction, as well as with coordination of childcare services, transportation, and food provision. The total involvement of these community organizations and the adult education programs, as well as the full support of the school districts, contributed to the success of SC IEL/CE programs.

**5. 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.**

The Curriculum Framework continued to be the driving force for instructional planning in regards to aligning adult education curriculum with the College and Career Ready Standards. The Curriculum Framework focuses on the identified skills that a student needs to obtain a measurable skill gain, career readiness certificate, high school equivalency diploma, and to prepare for postsecondary education and training. The framework is the result of a crosswalk between the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards (SCCCRS) and the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards. In addition, the framework provides the alignment of the standards with adult education assessments including the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), GED, WIN Ready 2 Work, and the Next Generation ACCUPLACER.

The OAE staff, State Trainers, Curriculum Specialists, and other subject matter experts from local programs provided local, regional, and statewide workshops throughout the 2020-2021 school year. During each Professional Development session, educators examined standards-based instruction, the standards’ alignment to instructional resources, the TABE 11 & 12 assessments, the GED assessment, and digital literacy integration to address Distance Education/Blended Learning instructional practices.

**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 OAE, in collaboration with the SCDE Grants Program and General Counsel, created and distributed a Corrections Education Request for Proposals (RFP) and five subgrantees were selected statewide. The competition was held in the spring of 2021 and the grant cycle began July 1, 2021 and will continue until June 30, 2025.

Grant monies totaling $502,000.00, were awarded to seven programs for fiscal year 2020-21. All programs were school district programs including a statewide school district governed by the SC Department of Corrections’ Division of Education. In an effort to reduce recidivism, College and Career Navigators and instructors provided Corrections Education students with academic and career services to assist students with obtaining secondary and postsecondary credentials prior to being released. Academic and career services provided include:

* High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED)
* WIN Career Readiness Courseware and Credentials
* Occupational Skills and On-the-Job Training
  + National Center for Constructions Education and Research (NCCER) coursework and credentials

Corrections Education programs directly served 764 students. Of these 764 students, 63 received a high school credential and 237 earned Career Readiness Certificates. As with other AEFLA funded services, Corrections Education programs were restricted in providing face to face services to students due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Most correctional facilities were required to lock down to ensure the safety of inmates and staff. As a result, instruction and GED testing halted immediately. Due to additional security concerns with technology, most instructors were limited in providing distance education options and used paper-based instruction instead. With growing concern of the pandemic affecting the Corrections Education community long-term, most of the facilities were able to provide limited live instructions using the Zoom platform in addition to the paper-based options.

The table below outlines the SC Department of Corrections Recidivism Rates of Inmates released during FY2014 – FY2018 and the explanation of how the recidivism rate is measured.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Year of Release** | | | | |
| **FY 2014** | **FY 2015** | **FY 2016** | **FY 2017** | **FY 2018** |
| **Total Number of Releases** | **9,485** | **9,354** | **9,147** | **9,305** | 8,585 |
| **Percentage of Releasees who Returned to SCDC:** | **Recidivism Rate by Year of Release** | | | | |
| Within One Year or Less | 5.6% | 5.8% | 5.5% | 5.0% | 5.7% |
| Within Two Years or Less | 15.2% | 15.7% | 14.2% | 13.8% | 14.8% |
| Within Three Years or Less | 22.7% | 22.3% | 21.2% | 20.2% | 19.4% |
| **Comparison of 3-Year Recidivism Rates by Inmate Attributes** | | | | | |
| GED Earned in SCDC Education Program | 21.3% | 17.3% | 15.8% | 15.3% | 12.8% |

**Terms/Definitions**

* Release/Releasee - An inmate becomes a releasee when conditionally released via placement on probation, parole, community supervision, or supervised re-entry or has completed the sentence (maxout). Inmates who died, left SCDC for appeals, or whose sentences were remanded are not included in recidivism analysis.
* Release Cohort - Releasees can be grouped according to a common factor. In recidivism analysis, release cohorts are distinguished by the fiscal year during which their release occurred (a fiscal year being July 1st through June 30th)
* Recidivist - An SCDC releasee is considered a "recidivist" when he/she re-enters SCDC custody (but excludes those inmates convicted and returned to prison for a past offense only, an offense that occurred prior to their release.)
* Recidivism Rate - This rate is the percentage of releasees who recidivated. A one-year rate is based on the number who returned within 12 months of release; a two-year rate is based on the number returned with 24 months; and a 3-year rate is based on the number returned within 36 months. Recidivism rate comparison among release subgroups is applied to the 3-year rate, which is a standard recommended by the Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals decades ago and subsequently applied by various correctional jurisdictions.