South Dakota Narrative Report 2020-2021

➢ **State Leadership Funds**

❖ Describe how the State used funds [made available under Section 223] for each required *Leadership* activity.

With a total State Leadership budget of approximately $159,000.00, South Dakota worked diligently throughout Program Year 2020 to provide appropriate guidance and to deliver high-quality professional development. In accordance with Section 223 of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014, South Dakota expended Leadership monies for the following activities, programs, initiatives, and projects:

- *Alignment of adult education and literacy activities with other core programs and One-Stop partners to implement the strategy identified in the Unified State Plan, including the development of Career Pathways to provide access to employment and training services for individuals in adult education and literacy activities.*

As the eligible agency, the South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR), along with its Title II Program Staff [and occasionally the other core programs and local AEFLA providers], made the following efforts during PY2020-21 toward general and specific WIOA awareness, access, and alignment.

- Served as one of the group-facilitators for the agency's WIOA Vision 20/21; this role included guidance on the Partnership Development Action Plans [with One-Stop Office Managers/Staff]
- Presented a two-page AEFLA Brief for the Workforce Development Council
- Contributed to the State's Core Partner Alignment Consortium Meetings; these meetings included executive, programmatic, and data representatives from all WIOA Core Programs
- Spurred dialogues with DLR Central Office staff (WIOA Titles I – III) and Executive Team supervisors on topics related to WIOA Joint Rules, Joint Reporting, co-enrollment tracking, assessment of basic skills, and the NRS Narrative Descriptors
  - Partnered with South Dakota Department of Human Services for a WIOA Data Exchange
- Participated in the state's largest One-Stop Local Office's Staff Meetings, monthly WIOA Core Program Meetings, and quarterly WIOA Community Partner Meetings
  - Led this same Local Office in explorations for compliantly sharing AEFLA data (monthly) with WIOA Title I programs, as well as Title IV programming, for local Data Validation and case-management purposes
- Provided One-Stop Local Offices with Adult Education, Distance Education, and High School Equivalency [preparation and testing] resources, guidance, and technical assistance
- Worked with a facilitator to identify and collate Title II providers' informational materials/narratives related to Adult Education and Workforce Development [with supporting data sets]; this effort then ostensibly served as a programmatic review to formally articulate, both quantitatively and qualitatively, Title II's capacity within the State's One-Stop System
- Partnered with WIOA Title I Adult and Youth to launch a collaborative service-delivery model called PREP: *Participants Reaching Employment Potential*; this initiative was designed to provide more wraparound supports and some type of Work Experience for those seeking a High School Equivalency
- Partnered with agency's Apprenticeship Program Specialists to explore viability of *Bridge to Healthcare* (i.e., pre-apprenticeship) for English language learners interested in pathways
- Extended programmatic overtures for coordination and invitations for professional development to Tribal Colleges, Job Corps, Statewide Association, and Literacy Councils

- *Establishment or operation of high-quality Professional Development programs to improve instruction.*

Summer Summit 2020
This 2020 conference's presentations, pre-conference sessions, and post-conference session were all virtual. Summer Summit 2020 featured sessions on evidence-based reading instruction, classroom-based research, mathematics/numeracy, listening comprehension for adults, GED® Testing topics/updates, English language acquisition, and Distance Learning. A total of 85 attendees registered from all seven AELFA Subrecipients, Job Corps, and two Tribal Colleges.

Adult Education Instructor Development Program (AE IDP)
State Leadership funds supported two cohorts of the AE IDP during PY2020; these cohorts also marked the first instances of our Virtual AE IDP. This teacher training serves as an induction for new instructors, as well as a refresher for senior staff. The IDP's participants reviewed assessment protocol (Tests of Adult Basic Education's 11&12 Series), ABE/ASE instructional methodologies, program structures, NRS, College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS), lesson planning, LD issues, and persistence-related topics. During PY2020's iterations, the Title II program continued to incorporate R. Brockett's book entitled *Teaching Adults: A Practical Guide for New Teachers* as part of the training's reflection component, as well as *Improving Adult Literacy Instruction* series from the National Research Council.

English Language Instructor Development Program (EL IDP)
The EL IDP was in its tenth year during PY2020; PY2020 also marked the first Virtual EL IDP. The state agency, along with SD's sole IELCE sub-recipient, delivered a cohort of training which constituted 2.5 days of mentorship, collaboration, [remote] classroom practice, virtual observation, and evaluation. (Beginning in PY2017-18, the EL IDP was extended a half-day based upon feedback from participants; the AEFLA program added a half-day to afford instructors additional time to observe Citizenship classes, Literacy classes, and Oral classes across student-levels.) Furthermore, virtual BEST Plus Administrator Trainings [and recalibration-trainings] were delivered for both new and senior ESL staff.

Teaching Skills That Matter (TSTM)
The agency, in coordination with the Professional Development Team, applied to the Teaching Skills That Matter project. In Q4 of PY2019, South Dakota learned it was selected to participate in Cohort II of this OCTAE/AIR Technical Assistance offering. The WIOA Title II Program Specialist and the TSTM team-members attended the 2020 TSTM Virtual Conference in June 2020. During PY2020, the SD TSTM Cohort completed their training and held a State Planning Meeting; subsequently, the team began unpacking and sharing the initiative's content through various formats, particularly the Third-Thursday Trainings (T^3).

Third-Thursday Trainings (T^3)
In PY2020, the WIOA Title II Program launched its new Third-Thursday Trainings [initiative] to bring a monthly topic to the field of Adult Education in a collegial, web-based format of 45 minutes or fewer. This effort has thus far highlighted local providers' staff-expertise related to conducting virtual and hybrid instruction via different formats and software, served as a platform to share Teaching Skills That Matter overviews, and afforded our partner-programs (e.g., Job Corps, State Library, Statewide Family Engagement Center) a venue to detail their resources and expand their networks.

Adult Education Credentials
Because the quality of instruction has the greatest impact upon student performance, it has been the prerogative of the AEL Program and PD Team for some time to develop a credentialing system. PY2019 saw the launch of this endeavor with four initial credentials: 1) Adult Education Instructor Development Program Core Credential, 2) English Language Instructor Development Program Core Credential, 3) Numeracy Core Credential, and 4) Reading Specialty Core Credential.

These credentials are optional and require the consent of each local administrator. Currently two of the Adult Education Credentials are also available to the staff of WIOA partner-providers (i.e., Tribal Programs and Job Corps) upon approval of their respective program supervisor. In PY2020, the program recognized its ninth iteration of credentials conferred—seven credentials to six staff. It is the intent of the PD Team to develop additional credentials in both *Data Quality* and *Remote Instruction*; admittedly, these drafting-efforts were largely in abeyance during PY2020.

- *Provision of Technical Assistance to AEFLA sub-recipients on topics including instructional and programmatic practices, staff training, One-Stop roles, and technology integration.*

National Training Institute (NTI)
The AEFLA Program Specialist and the Professional Development Team attended the National Association of State Directors of Adult Education's National Training Institute in autumn 2020. The six-day event featured virtual sessions on Addressing the Impacts of COVID-19, AEFLA's Statistical Adjustment Model, Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education, Integrated Education and Training, Digital Literacy, Equity in Access, and Student Engagement. This iteration of the National Training Institute was delivered in partnership with OCTAE as part of the [annual] National Meeting for Adult Education State Directors.

DOC's Adult Education Roundtables
In conjunction with a Deputy Warden and an Associate Warden at the South Dakota Department of Corrections (DOC), the AEFLA Program Specialist helped facilitate two DOC Adult Education Roundtables during PY2020. These roundtables were attended by AEFLA-supported instructors from all statewide DOC adult-sites.

Resultant of the Spring Roundtable, the Program Specialist and his WIOA Title I colleague presented to 50+ statewide Parole Agents at DOC's *Parole Services Annual Spring Training*. The agency representatives from Titles I and II thereby detailed WIOA's One-Stop Services available to individuals reentering society after incarceration; DLR also led a discussion with the agents about Barriers to Employment for individuals with ex-offender status.

Administrative Outreach
Two of the seven local AEFLA providers had new administrative leadership at the start of Program Year 2020. Therefore, the WIOA Title II Specialist coded notable time to State Leadership throughout PY2020 to assist these local program-directors with their induction into topics related to programming, fiscal grant-management, data quality, and accountability.

Taking OCTAE's cue on its delivery of *Shop Talk*, PY2020 also saw the commitment of the agency to establish regular, bi-monthly webinars. Therefore, there were six scheduled AEL Administrators' Meetings for the year; subsequently, the PD Team used the other alternating six months to schedule regular [bi-monthly] Professional Development calls. Naturally, these fixed schedules and routinized formats were well-received by the filed.

Distance Education Special Project
DLR's Distance Education Special Project was designed to provide incumbent workers, geographically isolated adults, and individuals with various barriers to participating in traditional Adult Education instruction (e.g., transportation, childcare, health issues, etc.) with some meaningful [synchronous and asynchronous] distance education opportunities. This endeavor was not only meant to benefit the aforementioned participants and other Title II providers, but to also advantage DLR One-Stop local offices in appropriate circumstances. While this project served as an allowable Statewide Employment and Training Activity under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (§134), Title II Leadership funds were expended to provide coordination, technical assistance, and support.

The agency, along with the Professional Development Team and the [local] Distance Education Coordinator, continued to provide outreach to AEFLA sub-recipients (Directors, Coordinators, Instructors, and Support Staff), and One-Stop/American Job Center operators (Managers, Employment Specialists, Workforce Development staff, TANF staff, and Career Navigators). The outreach consisted of informational overviews pertinent to the respective audience, as well as training in both how to access the different modules and how to coordinate services available as a participant in Distance Education.

Resultant of the COVID-19 pandemic, this project proved integral during both PY2019 and PY2020. The Distance Education Special Project not only provided access for existing students [who possessed the broadband, devices, and requisite digital literacy], but also served as a transitional offering for other statewide providers' students as local sub-recipients grappled with the necessity and protocol of operating their own level of remote instruction and alternative modes of offsite participation.

- *Monitoring and evaluation of the quality of, and the improvement in, adult education and literacy activities.*

Subrecipient Monitoring
During PY2020, the agency conducted two subrecipient monitors for both fiscal and programmatic facets of the grant-awards. These two monitors also ostensibly constituted the program's first comprehensive *virtual* monitors. As a related aside, the agency has historically used OCTAE's template as the foundation for its Local Monitoring Guide. In another inaugural process for PY2020, local providers used SharePoint to submit documentation and student-files in a secure manner whereby only authorized stakeholders could access the information.

The agency's monitoring protocol afforded each local provider some latitude regarding prerogatives for showcasing their instructional services. Once again, the local AEFLA providers humbled and inspired the monitor-team. One subrecipient coordinated the agency's ability to observe their synchronous [virtual] hybrid instruction via Zoom. The other provider prerecorded (and subtitled) videos from both their staff members' and students' perspectives; the student responses proved particularly poignant.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bH7WlKazWRU.

Not only did the State Director of Adult Education appreciate these insights and modalities, but the agency's Fiscal Staff also found the programmatic review very enlightening and informative for context related to certain vouchering processes. In short, the virtual demonstrations proved edifying for the agency and local providers alike.

Desk Monitoring
State staff provided continuous technical assistance through telephonic and electronic correspondence, desk monitors, conference calls, webinars, video teleconferencing, and even an occasion site visit. Furthermore, local administrators, instructors, and data specialists took advantage of the fact they could contact state staff with any questions regarding programmatic policies and data-quality issues with the assurance they would receive timely responses.

Adult Education's web-based Administrators' Meetings also provided opportunities to review participation rates, performance, data quality, policy changes, and program-goal updates. The Quarterly Reports assisted state staff with monitoring new or ongoing issues while concurrently providing agencies with more meaningful documentation and evaluative processes; the consistent submission of quarterly data-sets affords the local sub-grantee providers and the agency easy access to longitudinal comparisons across different points of the program year.

Evaluation of Quality and Improvement
South Dakota's Adult Education and Literacy Program continues to consider the challenges to and efficacy of juxtaposing outcomes of co-enrolled participants with those enrolled in only one WIOA Core Program. With the Bureau of Information and Telecommunications' assistance, DLR and the Department of Human Services (DHS) made significant progress during the first half of PY2020 related to the uploading of case-management information and Joint PIRL data's potential interoperability for the agencies' respective Management Information Systems; however, momentum unfortunately stalled when the leading DHS Data Specialist took a different position within state government.

Nonetheless, South Dakota's WIOA Title II Program Specialist continues to make AEFLA data readily available to DLR's Data and Evaluation Specialist, Policy and Data Analyst, and Executive Team. Additionally, the Workforce Development Council Members, WIOA Core Programs, WIOA Required Partners, and the One-Stop Managers are regularly encouraged to review South Dakota's Statewide Performance Report(s) and NRS Tables, as well as submit any other AEFLA-related data queries to the agency.

National Association of State Directors of Adult Education (NASDAE)
State Leadership grant monies paid South Dakota's 2020-21 membership dues to NASDAE. South Dakota's AEFLA Program Specialist yet serves as Secretary/Treasurer on NASDAE's Board of Directors, as well as a member of NASDAE's System Support Committee.

Management Information System
The Leadership funds supported the State's Management Information System for WIOA Title II under the National Reporting System. The monies covered the Hosting Fees, the Annual Maintenance Agreements for Local Providers, and the State's Annual Maintenance Agreement. The Leadership dollars also supported vendor-hosted webinar trainings. Four plenary webinars were held during Program Year 2020. These trainings addressed both general and specific aspects of data collection, entry, follow-up, reporting, analysis, and security.

Although attendance at the MIS trainings has been articulated for years in the sub-recipient agreements as "required," the agency realized this mandate was neither really feasible nor enforceable. Therefore, in Q4 of PY2018-19, the agency and its MIS vendor decided to begin delivering the web-based trainings via Voice over Internet Protocol. Not only did this decision allow the program to save money [telephonically], but it also afforded us the ability to record and archive the web-based trainings so staff not in attendance could review the material when their schedule allowed.

The program has since learned that even staff who were in attendance appreciate having the ability to revisit certain sections of the webinar with the follow-along visuals, rather than just a written transcript and screenshots. Subsequently, for PY2019-20, the agency changed the language in the sub-recipient agreement to read that if data specialists cannot attend a training, the recorded webinar must be promptly viewed thereafter.

Computer-based Supplementals for Corrections Education
AEFLA's Leadership funds again supported a contract with Essential Education, the vendor for GED Academy™ and TABE Academy™. These stand-alone, self-paced preparation programs for Adult Basic and GED® test-preparation were delivered offline specifically for our sites within the South Dakota Department of Corrections. Additionally, DOC and DLR began to explore in Q4 of PY2020 the possibility of expanding a web-based Digital Literacy curriculum's license to DOC sites under WIOA Title I's current contract. Leaders in both agencies recognize the need for such skill-practice as part of Prisoner Reentry and Work Readiness.
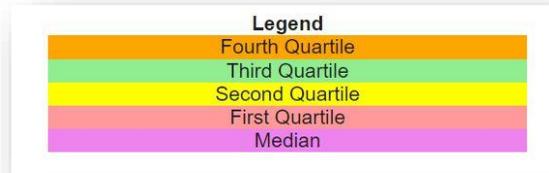
➢ **Performance Data Analysis**

❖ Describe how the adult education program performed in the overall assessment of core programs based upon 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.

Given the pandemic-related dynamics of PY2020, it seems most reasonable to contrast last year with PY2019. While South Dakota's WIOA Title II program served 1,402 participants in PY2019, PY2020 saw a comparable 1,365 participants [for a negligible 2.6% reduction in participation]. The Adult Education Program evidenced 25.47% Measurable Skill Gains in PY2019, while PY2020 finished at 34.49% MSG [for a 9% increase in performance]. Furthermore, the number of GED® credentials reported on PY2019's MSG Table numbered 126; however, PY2020 evidenced 216 GED® credentials [for a 71% increase in High School Equivalencies].

Performance Outcomes (PY2017 – PY2020)

Program Year	ABE MSG	ESL MSG	Total MSG	Q2 Employment	Q4 Employment	Median Earnings	Credential Rate
2017	41.38%	37.99%	40.25%	51.31%	46.17%	$5,721.14	21.70%
2018	45.56%	30.72%	40.80%	58.70%	56.20%	$5,575.85	40.52%
2019	25.82%	24.95%	25.47%	55.85%	58.80%	$6,151.15	55.20%
2020	34.37%	34.89%	34.49%	50.20%	49.95%	$7,220.47	43.42%

Legend

Fourth Quartile
Third Quartile
Second Quartile
First Quartile
Median

WIOA Title II's High School Equivalency Attainment

Program Year	Number of GED® Credentials Conferred
2017	281
2018	365
2019	126
2020	216

Due to South Dakota's pandemic-related recovery, unemployment rates are some of the lowest in the nation. And like everywhere, businesses and employers are clamoring for entry-level, mid-level, and skilled workers. Wages are seeming to increase as industries vie for qualified candidates. And still, these workforce-related factors and our clients' personal exigencies affect WIOA Title II's abilities to engage students long enough to post-test, confer GED® Credentials, and make significant investments in English language instruction. South Dakota's national rankings in the Employment Outcomes (i.e., Q2 Rate, Q4 Rate, & Median Earnings) highlight well the socio-economic realities [as best as such data-collection protocol can afford]. If someone needs or wants a job in South Dakota, the opportunities most certainly exist.

In retrospect, these past two COVID-affected years have made it apparent to the agency for the need to identify and reinforce a *Combined Post-Testing Rate* as a [renewed] metric henceforth. With the implementation of WIOA and its new MSG-rules, the post-testing rate was diluted as a means to identify post-testing fidelity because of how High School Equivalencies populate as MSGs across all Periods of Participation. The AEFLA Program Specialist plans to introduce a Combined Post-Testing Rate which calculates earned-HSEs with the NRS Table 4B figure. With this emphasis, both the agency and the local programs can get a more accurate measure of their progress toward the 60% Post-Testing Target.

Not only will a renewed focus on post-testing recalibrate expectations, but the PREP initiative noted earlier is also meant to support our co-enrolled learners so they can address some of the pressing needs of immediacy (e.g., food security, housing, transportation, childcare, etc.) so they can concentrate on their studies in a scaffolded, tandem case-management model. The agency continues to explore creative ways to not only support our co-enrollments to the fullest extent of the statute, but also means to collect data to validate efforts, identify promising practices, highlight opportunities for improvement, and improve collaboration [for the benefit of our participants and our WIOA Joint PIRL measures].

➢ **Integration with One-Stop Partners**

❖ Describe how the State eligible agency executes 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.

Integration of Activities
The Department of Labor and Regulation considers Adult Education a key component to Workforce Development; therefore, DLR works to reinforce Title II's efficacy by highlighting Adult Education services within its workforce and training programs such as National Career Readiness Certificate, Career Pathways, Registered Apprenticeships, Pre-Apprenticeships, Soft Skills Training, Job Search Assistance Program, Trade Adjustment Assistance, and the Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program; through this integration, partnerships have been formed and nurtured to best serve residents of South Dakota. Because many of DLR's clients have not been in school for years, they often need brush-up or remediation in Reading and Mathematics to have success in job training or postsecondary education.

Local field offices and the Adult Education programs continue to work closely to meet the needs of our clients. The strong partnership between the One-Stop and Adult Education is especially evident with the Integrated Resource Teams (IRT) concept being promoted across WIOA Core Programs and required One-Stop partners. The IRT model functions at the administrative level whereby staff communicate, coordinate, and collaborate; this IRT model also operates at the participant-level whereby the client meets with staff from the pertinent, involved programs within the One-Stop system.

Workforce Development Council
The Workforce Development Council serves as South Dakota's single-area statewide Workforce Investment Board. With the Council's support, Adult Education issues are addressed, and program initiatives are integrated or aligned with other statewide efforts. Labor and Regulation's Director of Workforce Development [who also acts as the State Director of Adult Education] has involvement in setting the Council's agenda, while the Cabinet Secretary serves the Council as DLR's voting member.

Within the Council's statutory obligations, local offices provide assistance with job searches, employment guidance and counseling, as well as referrals to appropriate services which benefit individuals under all WIOA Titles. The local offices support not only those seeking jobs and training, but also businesses and industries.

The One-Stop System of Delivery
Furthermore, the Titles I – III Program Specialists [all as DLR employees] work together to coordinate professional development and training activities, communicate performance expectations and procedural understandings, and collaborate to best assist the mutual program participants.

Regarding the applicable career services provided at the One-Stop, South Dakota's core programs compiled a master reference of all [locally] available services and supports (including required One-Stop partners) to increase awareness, facilitate referrals, promote enrollments, reinforce shared case-management, identify training opportunities, and formalize programmatic documentation. Moreover, the One-Stop provides the Basic Career Services, Individualized Career Services, Supportive Services, Follow-Up Services, and Training as detailed in Program Memorandum OCTAE 17-2.

Indirect costs from WIOA Titles I – III, and Title IV in some locales, help support the One-Stop system. Time is allocated according to function and an established percentage approved by DLR, as well as approved by the U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of Education.

As to WIOA infrastructure costs, the Agency instituted a fee schedule [for co-location] based upon square-footage and shared utility costs effective July 01, 2017; this cost-sharing plan was informed by the federal Joint One-Stop Infrastructure Funding Guidance. Infrastructure costs include (but are not necessarily limited to) janitorial, electrical, garbage, sewer, water, heating, landscaping, and snow-removal costs. The co-located sub-recipient also agrees to sign and comply with a *Facilities Use Agreement Indemnification* and an *Insurance Clause*.

➢ **Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) Program**

  ❖ Describe how the State is using funds under Section 243 to support these activities.

  • *Describe when your State held a competition for IELCE program funds and the number of grants awarded by your State to support IELCE programs.*

South Dakota's WIOA Title II Program conducted a multiyear grant competition in spring 2020. The agency ensured that eligible applicants used the same process and had direct, equitable access to compete for these federal funds. However, before formally announcing this 2020 Request for Proposal (RFP), in coordination with OCTAE's Division of Adult Education and Literacy, South Dakota's Adult Education and Literacy Program underwent a *Virtual Monitor*. The Virtual Monitor targeting South Dakota's 2017 RFP commenced in autumn 2019; the resulting Technical Assistance from this federal monitor assured a compliant 2020 RFP.

Resultant of the competition, one local provider was awarded the entirety of South Dakota's Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education pass-through funding. (While other providers deliver English Literacy and Civics Education, most of these services are considered "activities" rather than full-fledged IELCE "programs" due to the Integrated Education and Training [IET] requirements.)

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

In PY2020-21, the sole IELCE funding-recipient provided an adult English Language Acquisition (ELA) program which served 286 adults in the Sioux Falls area in order to develop learners' basic skills (reading and writing, speaking and listening, and numeracy) leading to self-sufficiency and success in community life, employment, further education/training, citizenship, and civic participation. This program integrated civics/citizenship activities into existing English language classes from the Beginning Literacy level to the Advanced level, as well as provided instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation, including American history and American systems of government. This ELA programming was delivered concurrently and contextually with Integrated Education and Training activities [including Workforce Preparation and Workforce Training].

Workforce Preparation activities were provided through monthly English language units aligned to the College and Career Readiness Standards, as well as quarterly IET topical units focused on specific transitional skills or occupational communication skills for an in-demand career pathway. These IET units were enhanced in PY2020 through the inclusion of the national, research-based Teaching Skills That Matter units. TSTM lesson plans were adapted for each of the NRS ESL levels to provide scaffolder access to key employability skills. Short-term managed-enrollment classes in Job Interviewing were offered as a supplement to English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction.

Workforce Training activities were offered every other quarter through sector-specific training courses across in-demand occupations/industries. ELA participants were invited to co-enroll in these Skills That Employ People (STEP) classes; the STEP classes included basic skills instruction in the context of sector-specific Workforce Training and used occupationally relevant instructional materials developed in partnership and collaboration with local employers. As determined by learner interests and backgrounds, as well as workforce needs. this years' sector-specific focus was General Manufacturing Skills and Safety. STEP-class participants were also enrolled in weekly Workforce Preparation classes/workshops such as Job Interviewing, Resume Writing, and Online Job-Applications. Resultant of COVID-19, all learners were offered online or in-person instruction for English Language, Workforce Preparation, and Workforce Training classes.

The provision of a Career Navigator position continues to be a promising practice. The navigator-role provides coaching though an individualized career development plan, advises on education and training needed in the chosen career pathway, connects the learner to job opportunities, and assists in the job application process. The Career Navigator acts as an advocate and cultural translator, effectively bridging adult English learners from Workforce Training to appropriate employment opportunities.

Partnership with local employers has been paramount to the development of occupationally relevant instructional materials. Employers provide insight to the skills and qualities they value in their workforce; moreover, businesses are invested in the success of the Workforce Training participants as they seek to fill open positions with trained and talented IET participants.

- *Describe how the State is progressing towards program goals of preparing and placing IELCE program participants into unsubsidized employment within high-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency and discuss any performance results, challenges, and lessons learned from implementing those program goals.*

The IELCE program delivered Integrated Education and Training activities through the provision of English Language Acquisition concurrently and contextually with Workforce Preparation Activities (i.e., transition skills), which included basic academics, critical thinking, digital literacy, self-management, resource-utilization, teamwork, and systems-navigation. The program integrated transition skills into English language classes in conjunction with the State ESL Competency Checklists and CCRS across all levels of English language instruction [as appropriate respective to Student Performance Levels]. This year instruction was enhanced by the addition of TSTM, Teaching Skills That Matter. All IELCE program staff received training, resources, and hands-on experience with this initiative.

The IELCE program delivered Integrated Education and Training activities through the provision of English Language Acquisition concurrently and contextually with Workforce Training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, integrated with the local workforce development system and its functions to implement program activities. Every other quarter, instructors developed and delivered an IET unit on Workforce Training; these Workforce Training units, entitled Workplace English for Specific Occupations, highlighted in-demand industries and occupations aligned with the current needs of local employers. Moreover, one IET unit focused on Healthcare Careers and the other, Hospitality Careers. These were provided to 146 IELCE program participants, providing rigorous basic skills instruction in the context of Workforce Training.

English language learners had opportunities every other quarter to co-enroll in Title II's Adult Education classes and STEP Classes. Each year STEP Classes are offered to provide sector-specific Workforce Training in areas such as Commercial Housekeeping, Retail Customer Service, Landscaping & Gardening, Manufacturing Safety, Childcare Training, Food Service & Safety, and Introduction to Patient Care. These intensive, two-week [to four-week] classes focused on in-demand occupations. Additional classes and curriculum enhancements were developed as needed to meet local workforce needs. For instance, when employers reported a need to strengthen math and measuring skills, this topic was further developed in the Manufacturing course-content.

During PY2020, two STEP classes were offered throughout the program year. The two General Manufacturing Skills and Safety courses served nine adult English learners during the program year. The placement of these learners into unsubsidized employment was accomplished through communication and collaboration with employers, the integration of occupationally relevant materials, as well as career counseling and job search support from the Career Navigator's role.

- *Describe how the State is progressing towards program goals of ensuring that IELCE program activities are integrated with the local workforce development system and discuss any performance results, challenges, and lessons learned from implementing those program goals.*

The IELCE sub-recipient's Education Coordinator consulted local workforce development experts, employment specialists, industries, and businesses to identify and create opportunities for collaborative efforts in providing integrated solutions to workforce needs. In partnership with the local DLR office, the IELCE sub-recipient's coordinator also participated in monthly WIOA Core Partners' meetings and quarterly One-Stop Partner Meetings. Additionally, this coordinator communicated monthly with employers and stakeholders to discuss which in-demand occupational trainings best met the current needs of local businesses.

The IELCE sub-recipient regularly corresponded with the local One-Stop to facilitate referrals of clients to English Language Acquisition, STEP, and Workforce Preparation classes. Referral efforts also encompass annual trainings of staff regarding the programs, eligibility requirements, and enrollment processes for Title II and Title I

programs. The IELCE provider, the WIOA Title II Program Specialist, and WIOA Title I's leadership have discussed the challenges related to referrals of English language learners, as well as the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration's emphasis that English language learners must be included in the priority populations for the Title I Adult program [per TEGL 19-16]). Dialogue and staff training opportunities continue in an ongoing effort to promote more referrals and increase co-enrollments.

➢ **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, describe how your Adult Education content standards are aligned with those K-12 standards.

The following is noted on the South Dakota Department of Education's website.

> *South Dakota Content Standards serve as expectations for what students should know and be able to do by the end of each grade. The review, revision, development, and feedback process involves stakeholders throughout the state of South Dakota and is an ongoing and critical component to ensure South Dakota students in every classroom receive current and relevant learning experiences. The goal is that all students will graduate college, career, and life ready.*
> https://doe.sd.gov/contentstandards/

South Dakota educators and content specialists participated in the review, revision, development, and feedback processes; in fact, one of WIOA Title II's current AEFLA-funded teachers, as well as one of DLR's One-Stop managers, previously participated in these standards-development processes. Furthermore, the South Dakota Department of Education, the South Dakota Board of Regents, and a member of the Board of Technical Education are voting representatives on the State's Workforce Development Council (i.e., single-area Workforce Investment Board).

The South Dakota Department of Education also determines the State's recognized High School Equivalencies; these secondary credentials have too aligned to meet the expectations of the College and Career Readiness Standards. Over the past number of years, the WIOA Title II program has worked diligently to recalibrate its instruction and activities to align with the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education. Per the WIOA mandate in Section 102, the State's Title II Program formally adopted a validated set of standards for its delivery of AEFLA instruction, activities, and services. As noted within South Dakota's Unified State Plan, the implementation became effective July 01, 2016.

➢ **Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals**

❖ 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 South Dakota Department of Corrections has the capacity to track recidivism data by program/fiscal year. DOC can isolate its release-data by those inmates who completed their High School Equivalency at any point while incarcerated, and who then were released during a particular program year. Therefore, the relative rate of recidivism for criminal offenders who earned a GED® credential while incarcerated in South Dakota, and who then were released at any point during PY2020-21, was 20.2%.

This figure (i.e., 20.2%) includes HSE-completers who served an expired or suspended sentence, as well as those granted parole in PY2020. Releases include those discharges having completed their sentence and those conditionally released to parole supervision; recidivists include those returning to custody upon conviction for a new felony [and resentenced to prison], as well as those with their parole revoked for a technical violation.