

# STATE LEADERSHIP FUNDS (ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY ACT SECTION 223)

Describe how the State has used funds made available under section 223 (State Leadership activities) for each the following:

## AEFLA SECTION 223(1)(A)

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)

With a total State Leadership budget of approximately \$165,000.00, South Dakota worked diligently throughout Program Year 2022-23 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:

- Partnered with WIOA Title I Adult and Youth to implement 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
- Facilitated 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
- Participated in the state's largest One-Stop Local Office's Staff Meetings, monthly WIOA Core Program Meetings, and quarterly WIOA Community Partner Meetings
- Provided One-Stop Local Offices with Adult Education, Distance Education, and High School Equivalency [preparation and testing] resources, guidance, and technical assistance
- Extended programmatic overtures for coordination and invitations for professional development to Tribal Colleges, Job Corps, and the Statewide Lifelong Learning Association
- Contributed to the State's Core Partner Alignment Consortium Meetings; these meetings included executive, programmatic, and data representatives from all WIOA Core Programs
- Attended and supported South Dakota's first *WIOA Symposium*, which was a statewide convening of programs, partners, and agencies to address the labor market and creative solutions to workforce challenges with data review, panel discussions, small-group conversations, and report-outs

## AEFLA SECTION 223(1)(B)

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

### Summer Summit 2022

South Dakota's annual WIOA Title II Professional Development conference, in conjunction with the statewide association, convened face-to-face for the first time since COVID. Summer Summit 2022, *Basking in the Greatness of Adult Education*, featured multiple strands (e.g., ABE, ASE/HSE, ESL), plenary keynotes, breakout sessions, and vendor sessions. Themes and topics included CCRS Speaking and Listening Activities for Literacy Level Learners, Project-Based Learning, Adverse Childhood Experiences, Social Studies, TABE Best Practices [with DRC's Mike Johnson],

LINCS resources [with Dr. Cherise Moore], CCRS Academic Vocabulary, Employer Partnerships, HyFlex Model, and Differentiated Instruction.

A total of 58 attendees represented all seven AELFA subrecipients, Department of Labor and Regulation, Job Corps, and two Tribal Colleges.

#### Adult Education Instructor Development Program (AE IDP)

State Leadership funds supported a cohort of the AE IDP during PY2022-23. 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. 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 twelfth year during PY2022-23. The state agency, along with SD's sole IELCE subrecipient, delivered a cohort of training which constituted three days of mentorship, collaboration, classroom practice, observation, and evaluation. Furthermore, virtual and onsite *BEST Plus Administrator Trainings* (and recalibration-trainings) were delivered for both new and senior ESL staff.

#### 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 PY2022, the program recognized its fifteenth iteration of credentials conferred—four credentials to four AEFLA-supported staff [from four different providers].

#### Student Achievement in Reading (STAR)

STAR is a national professional development initiative for adult reading instruction [created by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education] to help states and local programs improve adult reading achievement by implementing *evidence-based reading instruction*; STAR is intended for instructors teaching intermediate-level adult learners (grade level equivalent 4.0 – 8.9)

South Dakota's Professional Development Team [and National STAR Trainer] delivered a cohort of evidence-based reading instruction to nine (9) staff from 4 of 7 local AEFLA providers; additionally, the cohort included an instructor from Job Corps.

## **AEFLA SECTION 223(1)(C)**

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

### One-Stop Outreach

The primary PY2022-23 WIOA collaboration was the refinement of the PREP model: Participants Reaching Employment Potential. Therefore, the State Director of Adult Education coded notable time to State Leadership throughout PY2022 to assist the local providers with communication, data quality, and accountability. The partners used SharePoint to securely transfer participant-information in confidential manner; these transfers included instructional hours, assessment-scores, Programs of Study, progress reports, and sundry documentation. Additionally, there were updated means for tracking WIOA Co-Enrollments [within both the MIS] for the Statewide Performance Report. Moreover, there were opportunities to meet with WIOA Title I Adult/Youth Programs to discuss the delivery of tandem case-management.

PY2022-23 also saw the commitment of the agency to maintain standing *monthly* webinars. Therefore, there were twelve scheduled AEL Administrators' Meetings for the year; subsequently, the PD Team also decided to schedule regular monthly Professional Development calls. Given the expanded partnerships, statewide initiatives, and national broadband efforts, these monthly meetings have proved invaluable for disseminating updates, fostering discussions, maintaining contact, identifying Technical Assistance needs, and providing a regular venue for speaker-invitations or partnership-presentations.

The process of drafting, reviewing, and signing Memoranda of Understanding betwixt AEFLA Providers and the DLR's One-Stop Local Offices recommenced with the start of PY2022-23. These MOUs formally articulated local expectations for Referrals, Services, and tandem Case Management of Co-Enrollments.

### 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 again 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 subrecipients (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.

## **AEFLA SECTION 223(1)(D)**

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

### Subrecipient Monitoring

As a required State Leadership activity, the agency conducted two (2) AEFLA Subrecipient Monitors during PY2022-23. These monitoring and evaluation efforts were comprised of remote, virtual, and onsite components. Moreover, the programmatic and fiscal reviews included student-file review [with data validation], staff interviews, financial monitoring tools, MIS demonstrations, data-flow discussion, voucher review, staff-development conversations, and One-Stop Alignment topics. Subsequently, the agency issued formal Monitor Reports detailing a Summary, Scope, any Findings [and resultant Required Actions], Areas of Concern, Recommendations, and Noteworthy Practices.

### 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 subrecipient 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. As with the Technical Assistance priorities, evaluation of quality and improvement were primarily highlighted in context with Co-Enrollments' outcomes via the Participants Reaching Employment Potential service-delivery model. Moreover, the agency and its providers continue to use the program's *WIOA Title II Funding, Participation Levels, and Performance Ratings* [reference] as a framework for conversations about progress and improvement. This reference details figures, outcomes, and percentages for a host of primary, secondary, and tertiary metrics.

South Dakota's State Director of Adult Education 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.

## Dissemination of Proven or Promising Practices

The agency made concerted efforts to highlight Noteworthy Practices [from the Subrecipient Monitors] and Program Highlights from the AEFLA providers' Quarterly Reports during the monthly AEL Administrators' Meetings. Just as proven Data Quality practices are emphasized during the monthly LACES NexGen Webinar Trainings, local promising practices often are contextualized and promoted during monthly Third Thursday Trainings (T<sup>3</sup>).

Because local administrators and Data Specialists each have their own monthly venue, the T<sup>3</sup> Series was specifically designed for local AEFLA instructors, as well as for our colleagues at Job Corps and Tribal Colleges. These monthly forums are often facilitated by the instructors themselves; topics have included Student Engagement, Artificial Intelligence in the Adult Education Classroom, Family Literacy, Distance Education Supports, and Teacher Talk. Occasionally the forum hosts guest speakers from partner agencies.

## **AEFLA SECTION 223(A)(2)**

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

### NRS 2023 Regional Training

State Leadership funds supported a South Dakota cohort's attendance at the June 2023 iteration of *The Journey Continues: From Recruitment to Retention*. Three of the four members from the Professional Development Team [sans the State Director], in addition to a senior Data Specialist from a local provider, attended the National Reporting System's training in Texas.

This opportunity thereby allowed four leaders [from two local AEFLA providers] to focus on learner and teacher retention in adult education, as well as the desired impact on positive learner outcomes. By supporting subrecipient-programs' leadership in these realms of Data Quality, it seems to better contextualize the framework at the local level for the PD Team and the subsequent dissemination to the other five grant-providers.

### National Association of State Directors of Adult Education (NASDAE)

State Leadership monies paid South Dakota's 2022-23 membership dues to NASDAE. Additionally, South Dakota's State Director of Adult Education attended [virtually] the National Association of State Directors of Adult Education's National Training Institute in autumn 2022. The four-day event featured virtual sessions on WIOA Year Five Data, Journey to Enrollment, American Community Survey Data, PIAAC Data, Labor Market Information, and LINCS Learner Center Analytics.

### 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, provider-specific guidance, and data-analytic references. These web-based trainings addressed both general and specific aspects of data collection, entry, follow-up, reporting, analysis, and security.

At the beginning of PY2022-23, the agency transitioned from historically quarterly [90-minute] trainings to monthly [60-minute] trainings. Although this recalibration resulted in an increased investment of Leadership funds, the emphasis serves as a renewed, actionable commitment to Data Quality for South Dakota’s WIOA Title II Program.

**Performance Data Analysis**

## 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.

Although South Dakota’s WIOA Title II program served 1,635 participants in PY2021-22, PY2022-23 saw only 1,575 participants [for a 3.7% decrease in overall participation]. Beyond the year-over-year decrease in participants, Adult Education’s Total Measurable Skill Gains and awarded HSEs also decreased, 4.6% and 29% respectively. The agency found cold comfort in the ESL MSG and Credential Rate increases.

Performance Outcomes (PY2017 – PY2022)

| <i><b>Program Year</b></i> | <i><b>ABE MSG</b></i> | <i><b>ESL MSG</b></i> | <i><b>Total MSG</b></i> | <i><b>Q2 Employment</b></i> | <i><b>Q4 Employment</b></i> | <i><b>Median Earnings</b></i> | <i><b>Credential Rate</b></i> |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>2017</b>                | 41.38%                | 37.99%                | 40.25%                  | 51.31%                      | 46.17%                      | \$5,721.14                    | 21.70%                        |
| <b>2018</b>                | 45.56%                | 30.72%                | 40.80%                  | 58.70%                      | 56.20%                      | \$5,575.85                    | 40.52%                        |
| <b>2019</b>                | 25.82%                | 24.95%                | 25.47%                  | 55.85%                      | 58.80%                      | \$6,151.15                    | 55.20%                        |
| <b>2020</b>                | 34.37%                | 34.89%                | 34.49%                  | 50.20%                      | 49.95%                      | \$7,220.47                    | 43.42%                        |
| <b>2021</b>                | 37.93%                | 31.98%                | 36.44%                  | 56.22%                      | 50.20%                      | \$6,405.47                    | 30.50%                        |
| <b>2022</b>                | 30.45%                | 34.97%                | 31.86%                  | 54.49%                      | 54.98%                      | \$6,588.08                    | 50.92%                        |

WIOA Title II’s High School Equivalency Attainment

| <i><b>Program Year</b></i> | <i><b>Number of GED Credentials Conferred</b></i> |
|----------------------------|---|
| <b>2017</b>                | 281   |
| <b>2018</b>                | 365   |
| <b>2019</b>                | 126   |
| <b>2020</b>                | 216   |
| <b>2021</b>                | 249   |
| <b>2022</b>                | 177   |

For qualitative context, PY2022-23’s decreases in participation and performance [levels] seem largely attributed to multiple challenges with Section 225 programming—the State’s largest AEFLA provider, 3 of 7 local AEFLA Directors’ retirements [in addition to teacher-retirements], a provider relocation, and local efforts to balance HyFlex models with instructional capacity. Therefore, these realities heavily informed PY2023-24’s planned efforts for targeted New Administrator Training (i.e., induction), student-retention focus, teacher-recruitment emphasis, NRS Assessment Training Series, and additional Technical Assistance for local AEFLA staff.

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 somewhat 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].

The noted PREP initiative is 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.) while simultaneously concentrating 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 continues to collect data to validate efforts, identify promising practices, highlight opportunities for technical assistance, and improve partnerships [for the benefit of our participants and our WIOA Joint PIRL measures].

Resultingly, the South Dakota AEFLA Program is proud of improving its reported *Percent Enrolled in More Than One Core Program* on the PY2022-23 Statewide Performance Report [by 5.4% over PY2021-22's Co-Enrollment figure]. South Dakota made demonstrable progress in effectively tracking these common participants. Perhaps most importantly, we further strengthened the communication, coordination, and collaboration that underpin these efforts across the One-Stop System!

### **Integration with One-stop Partners**

## **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.

### 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 remediation or upskilling 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, multiyear grant-applications are reviewed, and program initiatives are integrated or aligned with other statewide efforts. Labor and Regulation's Director of Workforce Development often helps set 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 maintains a fee schedule [for co-location] based upon square-footage and shared utility costs as detailed in *Appendix 2* of its Unified State Plan; 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 subrecipient also agrees to sign and comply with a *Facilities Use Agreement Indemnification* and an *Insurance Clause*.

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE)

## **INTEGRATED ENGLISH LITERACY AND CIVICS EDUCATION**

Describe how the state is using funds under Section 243 to support the following activities under the IELCE program:



## IELCE FUNDS AND GRANTS

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.

Because of increased State General Funds for Adult Education appropriated during the 2022 Legislative Session, South Dakota's WIOA Title II Program was compelled to conduct a multiyear grant competition in spring 2022. By announcing the Request for Proposal on 28 March 2022 (with a 13 May 2022 submission-deadline), the agency ensured that eligible applicants used the same process and had direct, equitable access to compete for these federal funds.

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.)

## TRAINING ACTIVITY

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

In PY2022-23, the sole IELCE funding-recipient provided an adult English Language Acquisition Program which served 180 participants in the Sioux Falls area to develop learners' basic skills (i.e., reading, writing, speaking, listening, and numeracy) leading to self-sufficiency and greater success in family life, employment, education, job training, naturalization, and civic participation. This ELA programming was delivered concurrently and contextually with Integrated Education and Training activities, including Workforce Preparation activities 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 in-demand career pathways, including Customer Service and Healthcare. Transitional Skills units [including Problem Solving and Career Pathways Planning] integrated Teaching Skills That Matter (TSTM) approaches of problem-based and project-based learning. The quarterly IET units provided scaffolded access to key employability skills for learners at all levels of language proficiency. Short-term, managed-enrollment Job Interview Classes were provided bimonthly. Targeted Career Navigation was also provided to learners to assist with career-pathways planning and job-search support; Career Navigation support was aligned and coordinated with the local Job Service Office, including on-site WIOA Title I enrollments as needed.

Workforce Training activities were offered monthly through sector-specific training courses for in-demand occupations. ELA participants were invited to co-enroll in these *Skills That Employ People* (STEP) classes. STEP classes provide basic skills instruction in the context of sector-specific skills and vocabulary. They also leverage occupationally relevant instructional materials and have been developed in collaboration with local employers. Determined by learners' interests and backgrounds, as well as by workforce needs, the eight PY2022-23 STEP classes included: General Production Skills & Safety (x2), Basic Production Skills & Safety (x2), Food Service & Safety, Commercial Housekeeping & Laundry, as well as new courses in Construction Skills & Safety, as well as Entrepreneurship. STEP participants were also enrolled in Job Interview Classes with mock

interview practice. Upon completion of each STEP class, the Career Navigator helped connect adult English learners to appropriate employment opportunities.

## **IELCE SECTION 243(C)(1)**

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

The IELCE participants are prepared for employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency through contextualized basic-skills instruction in monthly ELA units, specialized IET units, and bi-monthly STEP classes for in-demand industries. Transition skills [including basic academics, critical thinking, digital literacy, self-management, resource-utilization, teamwork, and systems-navigation] are integrated into program curricula through the use of research-based tools such as Teaching Skills That Matter. These curricula are reviewed and enhanced annually by teams of trained and qualified instructors.

During PY2022-23, English Learners had opportunities nearly every month to co-enroll in STEP Classes. Curricula have been developed and purchased to reach English Learners at all levels of proficiency to support both entry-level and job advancement workforce training: Childcare Training, Commercial Housekeeping, Construction Skills & Safety, Entrepreneurship, Food Service & Safety, Introduction to Patient Care/Pre-CNA, Landscaping & Gardening, Manufacturing Skills & Safety, and Retail Customer Service. Upon completing their STEP classes, thirteen NRS participants were equipped with skills and language specific to these in-demand occupations. These students also had support from the Career Navigator and employment specialists for job-search and placement needs; additionally, some employers provided onsite interviews following STEP classes.

For reporting of PY2022 follow-up outcomes, the subrecipient delivering the IELCE programming evidenced Median Earnings [in Q2 after Exit] at \$10,217 compared to the statewide figure of \$6,589. This local IELCE provider's Q2 Employment Rate was nearly 61%, compared to the aggregate figure of 54.5%. While some of the learners' employment-requests are rather challenging to fulfill (e.g., narrow part-time availability, transportation issues, childcare needs), nearly all students completing STEP classes are able to acquire employment within one month of class-completion.

## **IELCE SECTION 243(C)(2)**

Describe how the State is progressing towards program goals of ensuring that IELCE program activities are integrated with the local workforce development system and its functions as described in section 243(c)(2) and discuss any performance results, challenges, and lessons learned from implementing those program goals.

The IELCE subrecipient's Education Supervisor consulted monthly with workforce stakeholders [including the local provider's employer-network, Job Developer, and Program Director] to align instruction with immediate workforce needs. The IELCE subrecipient's coordinator also participated in monthly WIOA Core Programs' Meetings and quarterly One-Stop Partner Meetings. Furthermore, STEP [class] offerings were communicated to the local One-Stop Office to support referrals and to enhance services for co-enrolled participants.

Technical Assistance and staff-training opportunities continue in an ongoing effort to promote referrals and to increase co-enrollments between the subrecipient and the local One-Stop

Office. The collaboration between the Career Navigator and Job Developer in connecting with employers both before and after each STEP class serves as a promising practice. Employers and community partners now often directly contact the IELCE subrecipient about job openings, job fairs, and onsite interview-opportunities. These tandem approaches support the integration of IELCE program-activities with the local workforce development system.

Adult Education Standards

## 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 following narrative comes from the South Dakota Department of Education's website.

*South Dakota academic 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 [sic] 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.*

*Content standards are set by the South Dakota Board of Education Standards. They are reviewed every five to seven years. Content standards do not mandate a specific curriculum.*

<https://doe.sd.gov/contentstandards/>

As a related aside, the South Dakota Department of Education and the South Dakota Board of Regents both have 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 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.

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

Rather than constantly, pedantically unpacking and detailing the College and Career Readiness Standards with local AEFLA programs, the *Teaching Skills That Matter* initiative has proven a more actionable approach (and accessible framework) to aligning Adult Education's curricular content with K-12 standards.

Programs for Corrections Education (AEFLA Section 225)

## **PROGRAMS FOR CORRECTIONS EDUCATION (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 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 PY2022-23, was 38.6%.

This figure (i.e., 38.6%) includes HSE-completers who served an expired or suspended sentence, as well as those granted parole in PY2022. 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.

\*The South Dakota Department of Corrections wishes to note this reported rate does not serve as an official measure of recidivism, nor is it predicative of programmatic success.