Technical Assistance Guide:

Adult Education and Family Literacy Act
Annual Narrative Report

Issued by the Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education
U.S. Department of Education
November 2024

AEFLA Annual Narrative Report Technical Assistance Guide

Annual performance reporting requirements for the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) includes the submission of a narrative report that addresses eight content areas. The narrative report provides the opportunity for States to submit qualitative information about their progress in implementing the requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) during the reporting period. Narrative reports are reviewed by OCTAE as part of desk monitoring and during program monitoring and technical assistance reviews. Additionally, the information in narrative reports may be analyzed collectively to produce national level reports that tell a more complete story of State accomplishments in implementing WIOA.

This technical assistance guide provides suggestions for a State to consider when developing its annual narrative report. The guide further explains statutory or regulatory references in the narrative questions in plain language. The requirement explanation is followed by **suggestions** for responding to each set of prompts. The suggestions are intended to stimulate thinking about possible responses that may be appropriate for the State, and not all suggestions are intended to be included in the response, nor are suggestions intended to be a complete listing of possible responses.

The italicized text is the wording from the prompts for the eight Narrative Report content areas in the National Reporting System (NRS) information collection "*Measures and Methods for the National Reporting System for Adult Education*" approved under OMB control number 1830-0027 (pp. 47-49).

1. *Introduction*

   Please provide an overview of the AEFLA program in the State, including opportunities and challenges implementing AEFLA for the reporting period.

   State responses may provide a brief discussion of how the State is addressing strategic priorities for title II as envisioned in the State's multiyear WIOA State plan. The introduction may describe how the State has implemented systemic improvements to strengthen program quality and accountability, support participants' educational and career goals, and adapt to evolving local and regional workforce development needs. Responses may also address demographic or economic shifts, or state policy changes or fiscal constraints that impacted the administration of the AEFLA program during the reporting period.

2. *State Leadership Funds* (AEFLA Section 223)

   The Requirement: AEFLA requires that each eligible agency use funds provided under section 223 (State Leadership Activities) to develop or enhance the adult education system in four areas.

   Describe how the State has used funds made available under section 223 (State Leadership Activities) for each of the following required activities. Identify the State's efforts for each leadership activity, and the challenges the State encountered while carrying out these activities. Please include information on troubleshooting and innovations.

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(a)(1)(A).*

The Requirement: AEFLA requires States to use State Leadership funds to align adult education and literacy with other core programs and one-stop partners, including developing career pathways to provide access to education and training services for adult education participants.

State responses may:

- Describe how adult education services were included in the State's overall career pathways strategies and the extent to which they provided access to adult education participants.
- Describe how co-location of adult education and literacy services in the one-stop center facilitated the alignment of services among one-stop partners.
- Explain how State initiatives promote alignment of partner services in one-stop centers.
- Discuss progress towards development of data sharing processes; extensive and coordinated cross-agency referrals; integrated service delivery activities; expanded access and recruitment across programs; development of common intake systems; and/or common reporting standards.

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

The Requirement: AEFLA requires that States use State Leadership funds to establish and operate high quality professional development programs to improve instruction in AEFLA-funded programs.

State responses should address the following areas that are specified in the requirement.

- Instruction incorporating the essential components of reading as these components relate to adults.
- Instruction related to the specific needs of adults.
- Instruction provided by volunteers or by paid personnel.
- Dissemination of information about models and promising practices related to AEFLA funded programs.

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

State responses should address the activities that the State is implementing to provide technical assistance to its eligible providers specific to three required areas. How the State:

- Disseminates instructional and programmatic practices based on the most rigorous research available in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition programs, distance education, and staff training.
- Provides access to employment, education, and training services as required one-stop partners.
- Assists in the use of technology, including for staff training, to eligible providers, especially the use of technology to improve system efficiencies.

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

The Requirement: AEFLA requires that State Leadership funds are used to monitor and evaluate the quality of adult education and literacy activities and to disseminate information about models and proven or promising practices within the State.

State responses may discuss implementation of monitoring and evaluation activities, including:

- Progress towards implementing risk-based tools.
- Improvements to monitoring procedures, including procedures to measure the quality of activities.
- Innovations related to the use of dashboards or report cards.
- Efforts to apply recent monitoring and evaluation results to identify and disseminate promising practices and to drive program improvement.
- Evaluations of special initiatives or targeted activities, such as IET implementation.

As applicable, describe how the State has used funds for additional permissible activities described in section 223(a)(2). Identify the State's efforts for each permissible activity and the challenges the State encountered. Include information on troubleshooting and innovations.

3. **Performance Data Analysis**

Based on the State data submitted to the National Reporting System (NRS) for this reporting period, describe the State's progress towards meeting its negotiated levels of performance. Please include in the discussion other State-identified initiatives for the reporting period, such as targets for student enrollments and teacher recruitment. What strategies were effective in helping the State make progress? What challenges did the State encounter and how were they addressed?

State responses may address the following areas that are specified in the requirement.

- **Process:** Describe the process the State used to analyze State and local performance data reported this year. How were errors and anomalies identified and resolved?
- **Results:** How did the State perform with regard to its negotiated levels of performance for each indicator? If local programs had performance targets, how did they perform? How did the State address any outliers?
- **Analysis:** Discuss any changes in the performance data compared with the previous program year. What factors may have contributed to any increases or decreases? Were

any changes due to one large local program, several programs, or something with a broader impact?

- **Action:** How did the State address local program performance issues this reporting period? How does the State plan to address these issues going forward? If unexplained anomalies were identified, what action will the State take to address these anomalies (i.e., additional analysis or data collection)? How does the State expect performance to change in the next program year?

4. *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. If the State delegated its required one-stop roles to eligible local providers, discuss how the State monitored the effectiveness of the local providers in carrying out the State's roles and responsibilities. Describe the career services and, if applicable, the supportive services that were provided through the one-stop system. Please explain how infrastructure costs for the AEFLA program were supported with federal, State, or local resources.

The Requirements: The State Eligible Agency (SEA) is the required one-stop partner for AEFLA. The SEA may delegate its one-stop responsibilities to one or more eligible providers or a consortium of eligible providers for a particular program in each local area. This designation allows the SEA to fulfill its duties throughout the State in each local workforce area. These duties include providing access to adult education and literacy programs and services; using funds to provide career services and fund infrastructure costs; entering a memorandum of understanding (MOU) on the operation of the one-stop; participating in the operation of the one-stop; and providing representation on the local board and its committees (as needed).

The requirement to provide access to career services through the one-stop delivery system can happen one of three ways:

- Have AEFLA program staff physically present at the one-stop.
- Have appropriately trained partner staff physically present at the one stop.
- Have direct linkage through technology to program staff who can provide meaningful information or services.

It is important to note that not all career services listed in the WIOA definition are applicable to the AEFLA program.[1] The applicable career services for the AEFLA program include:

- Outreach, intake, and orientation information
- Initial assessment of skill levels including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities, and supportive services needs
- Referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services
- Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of education, training, and workforce services by program and type of provider

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[1] *OCTAE Program Memorandum 17-2: Performance Accountability Guidance for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title I, Title II, Title III, and Title IV Core programs* (published August 23, 2017) provides a list of the applicable career and training services for the WIOA Title II AEFLA Program. Available at: https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/AdultEd/octae-program-memo-17-2.pdf (Attachment 7 - Table C).

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- Provision of information on availability of supportive services or assistance and appropriate referrals (including childcare; child support; medical or child health assistance available through the State's Medicaid program and CHIP; SNAP benefits; EITC; assistance under TANF, and other supportive services and transportation)

State responses should address whether and how the State has made designations. Responses may also describe:

- How it accomplished the designation, for example, through the assurance statements in the grant award, statements in its competition application, requiring narrative responses in the application narrative, or through a stand-alone communication, such as a letter or policy statement.
- If it has delegated some responsibilities and retained other responsibilities.
- How it has communicated the responsibilities an eligible agency has as a required one-stop partner (i.e., has the State provided technical assistance on the roles and responsibilities of one-stop partners; training on partnership development; etc.).
- How it determines that the delegated eligible provider is carrying out its roles and responsibilities, such as reviewing MOU and infrastructure funding agreements (IFAs), requiring narrative reports, or establishing monitoring procedures.

State responses should address how local programs provided access to career services and the types of services provided through the one-stop system. State responses may include:

- How local programs are providing access to career services through the one-stop system (staff on-site; cross-training; and/or direct linkage).
- A description of the types of career services provided through the one-stop system and how the services respond to local one-stop center and community needs.
- How the State provides guidance or technical assistance to local programs on fulfilling this requirement and how the State determines if the requirement is being met.

State responses should address how infrastructure costs are being supported through the local option. Responses may address such issues as:

- The State's role in reviewing IFAs. Was there a joint process for reviewing IFAs among State workforce partners?
- The extent to which the State office was involved in the local negotiations.
- The primary methods used to determine proportionate share and relative benefit (square footage of co-location space in one-stop center, actual use, etc.).
- Any changes to IFA policies or guidance during the program year.
- Challenges and successes/progress in negotiating the IFAs.

5. *Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) Program* (AEFLA Section 243)

Describe how the State's development and implementation of IELCE program, including the civics component, enables adults to acquire the skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens, how local IELCE programs were assessed by the State, as well as performance successes and challenges. Discuss how the State used performance data to improve the quality of the IELCE program. Please provide the date of the most recent IELCE competition and the number of years for which grants were awarded.

Describe when the State held a competition [the latest competition] for IELCE program funds, the number of years for which grants were awarded, and the number of grants awarded.

The Requirements: The same requirements apply to competing section 243 funds as with section 222 funds. These requirements are detailed in here: Subpart C and include conducting a multi-year competitive grant process, ensuring direct and equitable access and considering 13 required factors in the award of those grants.

State responses may address:

- The most current award year and the length of the multi-year award.
- The number of grantees funded and may include the range of grant size.
- Strategies used in the RFP to target services to specific subpopulations, including professionals with degrees and credentials in native countries.

Describe the State's efforts in meeting the requirement to provide IELCE services in combination with integrated education and training activities as described in section 243(a) and how the State is ensuring access to IET programs.

The Requirements: Educational services in the IELCE program are required to be delivered in combination with integrated education and training activities. A program that receives IELCE funds may meet the IET requirement by co-enrolling participants in an IET program that is funded from sources other than section 243, such as IET programs already established in the local or workforce area, including IET programs established with AEFLA funds. It may also meet the requirement by using section 243 funds to establish and operate an IET program. Not all students enrolled in a IELCE program are required to be enrolled in an IET, however, all IELCE participants who can benefit from an IET program, must have access to an IET program through the IELCE program. This means that a funded eligible provider must offer the IELCE program in combination with IET.

State responses may address:

- Whether it used section 243 funds to establish IET programs or whether funded eligible providers used IET programs established with funds other than section 243 funds. When a State identifies that both methods (or a combination) were used, the State is encouraged to provide information that describes the extent to which each method was used.
- The design of IELCE programs that fulfill the requirement to provide education services in combination with IET. Responses can address changes made to design, lessons learned, and challenges that remain.
- Professional development or technical assistance it provides funded, eligible providers to clarify the requirements of the IELCE program. Responses may address progress made and challenges that remain in assisting programs to understand the requirements of the IELCE program.
- Examples of promising practices that funded eligible providers have implemented within their IELCE programs to support IELCE and IET participants (e.g., funded positions such as career navigators or counselors).
- Specific examples of successful initiatives or promising practices that exemplify successful efforts to provide IELCE in combination with IET (e.g., efforts to target

specific sub-populations of English learners and/or specific occupations or industry sectors).
- Challenges or lessons learned in meeting the requirement to provide IELCE in combination with IET.

Describe how the State is 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). Include challenges and lessons learned.

State responses may:

- Describe how funded eligible providers establish partnerships with employers, workforce boards, and other stakeholders. Responses may also include the States and/or funded eligible providers coordination efforts with other available education, training, and social service resources.
- Describe the number and types of IELCE/IET sector pathways that are available and accessible to IELCE program participants.
- Describe how funded eligible providers have developed support services (e.g., career navigator positions) to assist in the successes of IELCE/IET program participants. Responses may also include examples of promising practices that offer educational and career counseling services that assist IELCE/IET participants with transition to postsecondary education or employment.
- Describe performance results, challenges, and lessons learned from implementing program goals.
- Report job placement results, where it has such data. Responses that describe how it overcame challenges to implement job placement requirements, including the partnerships put in place to achieve results are encouraged.
- Explain how pre-apprenticeship programs are helping to meet the program goals to prepare and place participants in unsubsidized employment.

Describe how the State is progressing toward ensuring that IELCE program activities are integrated with the local workforce development system and its functions as described in section 243(c)(2).

State responses may:

- Describe the results of its process for submitting applications to workforce boards allowing the boards to make recommendations for improved alignment with the local plan.
- Describe IELCE representation on local workforce boards.
- Describe efforts to connect the IELCE program with larger State workforce initiatives, such as apprenticeship initiatives.
- Include efforts to cross-train local staff in one-stop systems. Responses may also describe referral efforts between WIOA partners and increased efforts to co-enroll students.
- Include how it contributed to meeting the primary indicators of performance in the State's Unified or Combined State Plan. Responses may also describe performance results, challenges, and lessons learned from implementing program goals.

6. *Integrated Education and Training (IET) (AEFLA Section 203 (11))*

Describe the State's implementation of IET programs, including its development and review process (e.g., labor market analysis or needs assessment) and the number of IET programs available in the Tate. Discuss whether the IETs are offered in adult basic or secondary education, IELCE or corrections education programs, how the IET programs are assessed by the State, as well as the performance successes and challenges for the reporting period.

The Requirement: WIOA requires IET programs to integrate adult education and literacy activities, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training activities with appropriate rigor and quality while support participant learning and career planning. The IET program uses a single set of learning objectives to facilitate the contextualization of foundational skills and workforce preparation into training skills. The three components of IET must be provided concurrently and contextually.

State responses should describe:

- The number of IET programs offered in the State.
- The State's IET development and review process. For example, how the State used labor market analyses and needs assessment to inform IET development and implementation.
- Whether the IETs are offered in adult basic or secondary education, IELCE, or corrections education programs.
- How the State assesses IET programs, including performance successes and challenges for the reporting period.

State responses may describe:

- Policy and programmatic changes that the State implemented during the reporting period to increase access to IET programs that align to local workforce and economic needs, and learners' education and career interests.
- Professional development and technical assistance offered to enhance state and local program administrators' and teachers' capacity to plan, design, implement, and evaluate IET programs.
- Efforts to establish and sustain partnerships with employers, workforce and human service providers that contribute funding, training, and supportive services to enable IET implementation.

7. *State-adopted Adult Education Content Standards*

Describe the State's successes and challenges with implementing State-adopted adult education content standards, including how the State monitors the implementation of the standards in local programs.

State responses may:

- Address any changes it has made to its Adult Education content standards during the program year.

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- Address how it aligned any changes to content standards for Adult Education with the State's content standards for K-12.
- Provide a link to its Adult Education content standards.
- Describe any State requirements, guidance, and policies related to grantees' implementation of State-adopted standards-based instruction issued in the program year.
- Describe how it monitors the implementation of standards-based instruction at the program- and classroom-levels.
- Describe how it is providing English learners' access to core academic content in conjunction with their learning English, including how it ensures Adult Basic Education (ABE) curricula include supports/scaffolds for English learners.
- Describe how it is ensuring curricula align to the State-adopted standards.
- Describe the impact of participation in Standards-in-Action initiatives and your State's ongoing sustainability efforts.
- Describe its state-level professional development and technical assistance related to standards implementation, including on-line resources.

8. ***Programs for Corrections Education and the Education of Other Institutionalized Individuals*** *(AEFLA Section 225)*

Describe the State's implementation of corrections education, how the programs were assessed by the State, as well as the performance successes and challenges for the reporting period. Include the types of correctional facilities in which these programs operated (e.g., jail, prison), the activities the State supported with section 225 funds, and whether the State used other funding sources to support these activities.

What was the relative rate of recidivism for students served under section 225? Please describe the methods and factors used in calculating the rate for this reporting period.

The Requirement: AEFLA requires that States provide corrections education and education for other institutionalized individuals (Section 225). Corrections education is for any individual who is charged with or convicted of any criminal offense who resides in a correctional institution. Other institutionalized individuals are not defined in WIOA, but examples might include persons who reside in facilities operated by a State mental health agency or individuals in civil confinement institutions. States must report for programs of corrections education and the education of other institutionalized individuals their progress in carrying out these programs, "including the relative rate of recidivism for the criminal offenders served."

State responses may describe:

- The number, type, and location of agencies, educational entities, correctional facilities, and non-governmental organizations that delivered correctional education during the reporting period.
- The type of programming offered (e.g., adult basic or secondary education, IET, IELCE, etc.).
- Performance outcomes, challenges, and successes for Section 225 programs.
- Methods and factors the State used for calculating the recidivism rate for the reporting period.

States may consider these questions when responding to the relative rate of recidivism prompt: when responding to the relative rate of recidivism prompt:

- What measure is your State using for recidivism? Is it new arrests? New commitments to local jail or State or federal prison?
- Who are you serving? Is your population being served in jails, prisons, or is your population on parole or probation?
- Are there MOUs with criminal justice agencies for data collection? How do your criminal justice agency partners define recidivism?
- What programs are you providing under Section 225? What is the rate of recidivism for individuals participating in those programs? If the data are available, it may be useful to report by program (i.e., IELCE program recidivism is 43% three years after release, ABE program is 56%, etc.).