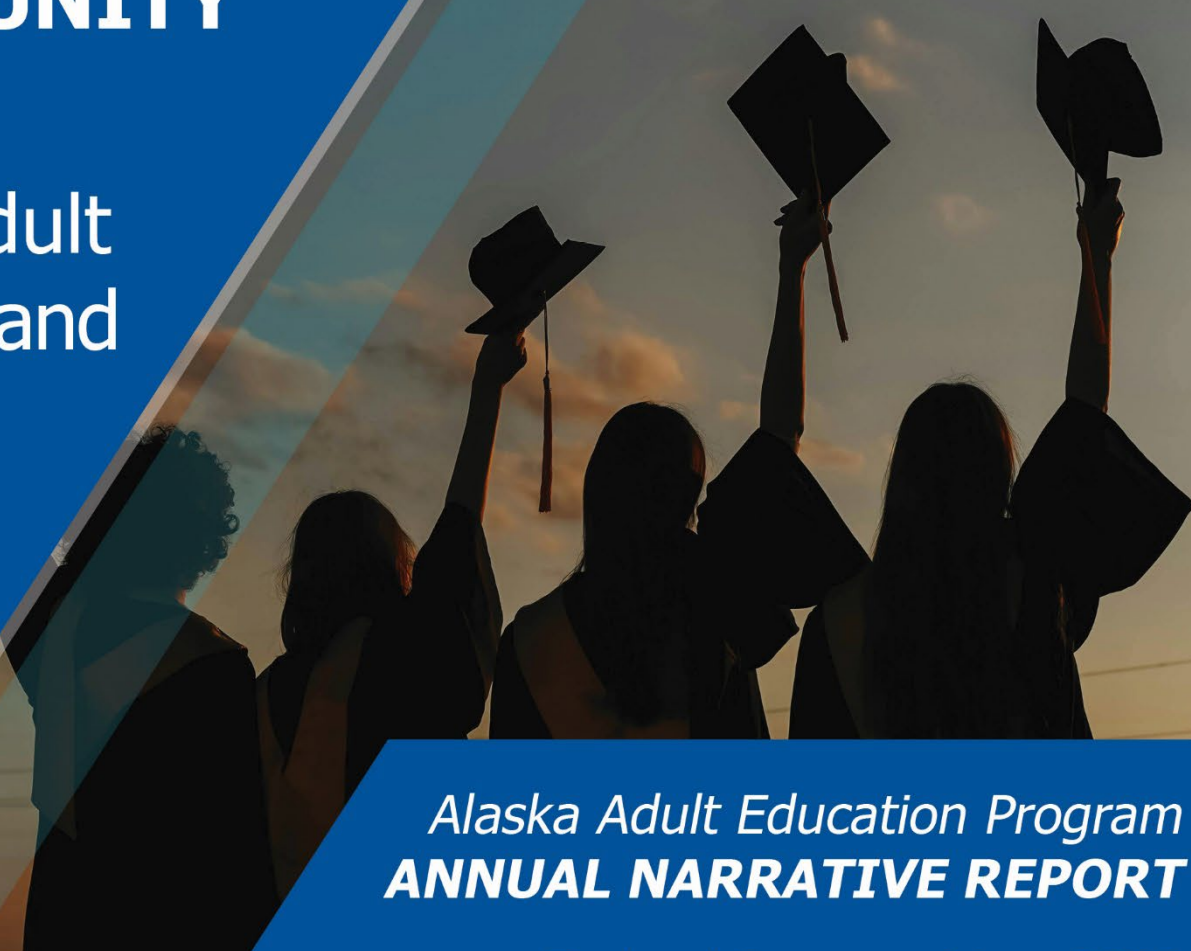




STATE OF ALASKA
Department of Labor and Workforce Development
Division of Employment and Training Services

WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

**Title II: Adult
Education and
Family
Literacy
Act**



Alaska Adult Education Program
ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT

Federal Program Year 2023
July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024

Windy Swearingin
Education Specialist II
Adult Education Director
windy.swearingin@alaska.gov
(907) 465-8714



Date of submission:
December 31, 2024
**Division of Employment
and Training Services**
P.O. Box 115509
Juneau, AK 99811-5509

Contents

Introduction	1
State Leadership Funds (AEFLA Section 223)	1
Alignment with Partners to Implement Combined State Plan (223(a)(1)(A))	1
Professional Development (223(a)(1)(B))	2
Technical Assistance (223(a)(1)(C))	2
Monitoring and Evaluation (223(a)(1)(D))	3
Additional Permissible Activities (223(a)(2))	3
Performance Data Analysis	3
Participant Eligibility Requirements	3
Integration with One-Stop Partners (34 CFR part 463, subpart J)	5
Required One-Stop Roles to Eligible Providers	5
Career Services Provided in the One-Stop	5
Infrastructure Costs	5
Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) Program (AEFLA Section 243)	6
IELCE Competition and Grant Awards	6
Integrated Education and Training (IET) Activities	6
Unsubsidized Employment (243(c)(1))	7
Local Workforce Integration (243(c)(2))	7
Integrated Education and Training (IET) (AEFLA Section 203(11))	8
Implementation of IET Programs	8
Adult Education Standards	8
Content Standards	8
Programs for Corrections Education and the Education of Other Institutionalized Individuals (AEFLA Section 225)	9
Recidivism	9

Introduction

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) services are coordinated in Alaska by the Alaska Adult Education (AAE) program, housed within the Division of Employment and Training Services (DETS) in the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development. During Program Year (PY) 2023 (July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024) the DETS leadership team, which consists of the division's Assistant Director of Workforce Services and Development, Regional Managers from the Alaska Job Center Network, the Employment and Training Technical Unit Manager, and the AAE State Director, focused on improving consistency within the AAE program. The team met virtually biweekly and in-person biannually to strengthen partnerships and ensure implementation of system improvements. These meetings included touch points such as strategies for overlapping and integrating service delivery; and helped all participants to better understand communication expectations and strategies for local programs and services.

AAE local programs provide instruction in the skills of reading, writing, and mathematics to adult learners to better prepare them for transitioning into the labor market, collegiate level academe, or vocational training. Local programs are required to provide adult education and literacy services at a minimum of thirty hours, four days per week, and for at least nine months per year. Alaska programs are required to provide the following federal services:

- Adult education;
- English language acquisition activities;
- Workplace adult education and literacy activities;
- Literacy; and
- Digital literacy (State requirement).

Local programs may offer the following additional activities:

- Family literacy activities;
- Integrated English literacy and civics education;
- Workforce preparation activities; or
- Integrated education and training.

Local programs receiving funding for Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) or Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals must follow the grant requirements as outlined in the AEFLA regulations.

State Leadership Funds (AEFLA Section 223)

Alignment with Partners to Implement Combined State Plan (223(a)(1)(A))

The AAE program implements strategies aligning regional and statewide activities with partners listed in Alaska's WIOA [Combined State Plan for PYs 2020 – 2023](#).

The State AAE Office continues to provide technical assistance to local programs to align services with One-Stop partners. Some successes and challenges in PY 2023 included:

- Held multiple Employer Roundtables, as a partnership between the Anchorage local program provider and Anchorage One-Stop job center, to highlight the hiring of English language learners and share best practices to help them succeed in the workplace. The Valdez local provider and job center are looking to start similar employer outreach this program year.

- Coordinated an Anchorage Regional partnership with Alaska’s One-Stops in the Municipality of Anchorage via monthly meetings to discuss barriers and changes to the One-Stop system, as well as planning events hosted at local providers.
- Hosted immigrant and refugee-focused job fairs in Anchorage and Fairbanks regions.
- Provided services to Vocational Rehabilitation referrals in the Kenai Peninsula Region for remedial skills development to prepare their clients for college classes.
- Addressed staff turnover, where key positions in rural areas can be vacant for months requiring rebuilding partnerships, referrals, and collaboration once refilled.
- Struggled to maintain stable relationships between local AAE partners and some WIOA Youth local providers due to turnover in the Youth program, which resulted in collaboration between State Youth Coordinator and AAE State Director to bridge the gap between services.

Professional Development (223(a)(1)(B))

The State AAE Office used leadership funds to support AAE local program professional development via both in-person and virtual meetings and communication during the program year. A local program coordinator training and an Adult Education conference were held in Anchorage and offered virtually, where the leadership team disseminated information regarding regulations, policies, and promising practices. In addition to these events, the AAE State Director held monthly meetings for local program coordinators.

Alaska’s PY 2023 Hybrid Statewide Adult Education Conference took place February 27-29, 2024. The State AAE Office partnered with the Alaska Adult Education Association (AAEA) to provide a conference platform that brought Alaska’s teachers, program coordinators, and staff a viable and accessible hybrid conference option. The three-day conference began with a keynote address by the Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development Catherine Muñoz. The event included training and informational presentations for local program coordinators as well as presentation strands including English as a second language (ESL), workplace literacy, digital literacy, Corrections, Integrated Education and Training (IET), assessments, and adult education instructional practices.

The AAE Program Coordinator Annual Meeting occurred in-person and virtually October 3-5, 2023. The State AAE Director and professional development team presented topics including AspireAlaska Training, interpreting and using reports for program improvement, understanding AI, assessment changes, statewide IETs, and recruitment and retention strategies.

In addition to these events, the AAE State Director held monthly virtual meetings for program coordinators to provide relevant program information, training with guest speakers, or technical assistance.

Technical Assistance (223(a)(1)(C))

The State AAE Office disseminates information to local programs through group and individual emails with announcements, program changes, and areas of need. The AAE State Director and staff also provided technical assistance as needed to eligible providers. The State AAE Office engaged in daily communication with programs regarding updates and questions on topics including:

- Administration of Test of Adult Education (TABE), Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS), Basic English Skills Test (BEST), and WorkKeys;
- Age restriction requirements;
- Grant management and allocations;
- Intake policies and procedures; and
- AlaskaJobs (the State’s Monitoring Information System) training, technical assistance, and data entry procedures.

The State AAE Office also provides targeted technical assistance to individual programs. Throughout PY 2023, the Department of Corrections grantee has had a targeting technical assistance meeting set up bi-weekly. Training topics have included the AlaskaJobs system and how to input data; interpreting TABE scores and how to discuss the results with students; and intake policies. These targeted technical assistance meetings have helped with data collection errors and training new staff.

Monitoring and Evaluation (223(a)(1)(D))

The State AAE Office traveled to Soldotna, Homer, and Kodiak to monitor four programs using on-site monitoring, financial monitoring, and teacher observational tools for evaluation. Local programs received technical assistance, best practice recommendations, and a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) if necessary. The AAE Office also highlighted the following best practices to recommend during technical assistance and training of other providers:

- The local provider in Soldotna worked with Vocational Rehabilitation on a college bridge program for students enrolled in pre-college classes. The college provides a six-credit transition-to-college scholarship for adult education students who successfully complete AAE's College-Knowledge training preparation.
- The local provider in Homer created a Life Improvement Class and College and Career Exploration course for students to learn about career pathways focused within the community. Homer students have successfully solidified their career goals after exploration and gone on to post-secondary education and employment.
- The local provider in Kodiak is building a Workplace Literacy program with a local employer and students who need language assistance to understand the language around fisheries. They work with students to build knowledge based on the employer's needs including understanding driving logs, medical forms, and fish terms.

Additional Permissible Activities (223(a)(2))

The State AAE Office used funds for additional permissible activities to work with the American Institutes for Research to write and adopt standards for English Language Proficiency.

Performance Data Analysis

Participant Eligibility Requirements

Alaska's unique geographic, cultural, and economic barriers continue to hinder access to training, education, and employment, the most prominent among these barriers are transportation, weather, and the digital divide. Each Regional Adult Education program serves a vast number of small communities in regions the size of most states in the continental United States, in areas without roads that can only be accessed by boat, ferry, bush plane, snowmobile, dog sled, or distance delivery. Many of these communities still have little or no internet access.

Despite these challenges, data for PY 2023 continued to show improvements in almost all areas of performance, including Overall Enrollment and Employment gains. Measurable Skill Gains also increased this program year but remained below the negotiated level. The Core Follow-up Outcome Achievement measure also remained high for employment outcomes.

Alaska reported 1,305 full-time students in PY 2023, a four percent increase in enrollment from the previous year's totals. Table 4: Measurable Skill Gains (MSG) by Entry Level of the National Reporting System (NRS) for Adult Education report Alaska submitted in October indicated 23.32 percent of the total number of period of participations (POP), another increase over PY 2022. While MSGs for English language learners (ELLs) decreased significantly to 8.40 percent, the adult basic education (ABE) level increased dramatically to 36.63 percent.

Alaska met negotiated levels of performance for three of the five performance indicators in PY 2023.

Performance Measure	PY 2023 Negotiated Levels	PY 2023 Indicators of Performance	+ or - Achievement
Employment 2nd Quarter After Exit	37.00%	40.51%	+3.51%
Employment 4th Quarter After Exit	38.00%	45.62%	+7.62%
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$4,750.00	\$7,035.43	+\$2,285.43
Credential Attainment	27.00%	19.66%	-7.34%
MSG	25.00%	23.32%	-1.68%

Credential attainment continued to be a struggle for local providers and fell below the negotiated level during the reporting period. PY 2022 data showed a high credential attainment indicator, but no abnormality was noted in data collection or monitoring. PY 2023's data is more in-line with past performance. This continues to be an area that is addressed through professional development and program coordinator training. The State AAE Office plans to continue addressing these concerns and monitoring credential attainment data through this program year.

Full-time student counts over the last three program years are used to prompt discussions about recruitment needs, training delivery methods, and retention. PY 2023 enrollment numbers continued to rise and exceed pre-COVID levels. The majority of students entered programs desiring to complete high school or improve their English skills.

Program Year:	Full-Time Students
PY 2021	933
PY 2022	1,255
PY 2023	1,305

Enrollment in Adult Education skills classes increased by 11 percent, while Alaska saw a four percent decrease in ELL students over PY 2022. Even though there is a slight decrease in ELL students from last year, the student population continues to rise over previous years due to the refugee influx within the state.

Program Year	Adult Ed	Secondary Ed	ELL
PY 2021	519	27	387
PY 2022	596	21	638
PY 2023	660	31	614

Pre/post-test rates remained consistent generally but below the goal of 55 percent, with a PY 2023 post-test rate of 48.22 percent. A decrease in pre/post testing with ELL students was likely the direct result of switching to the new CASAS assessment, where most local programs chose to pre-test with the new assessment beginning in early fall and sunset by the end of the program year, resulting in a decrease in post-test rates among this subgroup. Local programs also struggle with post-testing due to the transient population of students in Alaska and the challenges listed above. The AAE Office continues to address concerns with Educational Functional Level (EFL) gains through pre/post assessments via professional development.

The AAE State Director continued to collaborate with partner agencies to maintain policies and procedures for collecting common data elements for future reporting.

Integration with One-Stop Partners (34 CFR part 463, subpart J)

Required One-Stop Roles to Eligible Providers

The goal of universal access is that workers, job seekers, and employers may all obtain services under one roof from easy-to-find locations and distance delivery. Employment and training services provided through the Alaska Job Center Network are the foundation of the One-Stop delivery system in Alaska, providing universal access to labor exchange, career, and training services at 13 locations around the state. Alaska's AAE, WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser, and WIOA Title IB Adult and Dislocated Worker programs are all housed in DETS, which provides a natural link between AAE, WIOA Title I, and Title III.

Alaska's Management Information System (MIS), AlaskaJobs, integrates Alaska's online labor exchange, WIOA Titles I, II, III, Jobs for Veterans State Grant, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Work Opportunity Tax Credit, and Alaska's state funded employment and training programs' participant data management and reporting tools, allowing for federally required common participant performance reporting.

As a federated system with common intake as well as managed data sharing, AlaskaJobs links each of the programs through common identifiers to provide data matching to derive accurate performance indicators and reduce the need to manually pool data. Interagency partnership offers joint accountability requirements between the Participant Individual Record Layout (PIRL) and NRS for Adult Education.

Career Services Provided in the One-Stop

The AAE State Director took part in a weeklong hybrid professional development training for Title IB, Adult and Dislocated Worker Case Managers during the program year. The AAE State Director will continue to participate in Title IB training to provide Title II support at least annually.

Alaska's WIOA partners (Title I, II, III, and IV) also participated in the 2023 Evaluation Peer Learning Cohort (EvalPLC) to receive interactive technical assistance. The Alaska team chose to focus on a cross-agency referral system between the titles to better serve students and other individuals. The team worked together throughout PY 2023 and will participate in the 2024 cohort to further develop and implement the project.

In the Anchorage region, the adult education local provider worked with the Anchorage Midtown Job Center to provide two partner employer roundtable meetings to introduce adult education services and to discuss barriers employers face with hiring. These meetings initiated a quarterly series aimed at helping employers understand what they can do to alleviate some of their frustrations within their workforce.

Infrastructure Costs

The Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) for Alaska began its design in the fall of 2017. The Alaska Job Center Network One-Stop Partner Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was fully executed in September 2018 and implemented during that program year.

The IFA was developed in partnership with the agencies listed in the MOU that are either physically or programmatically located in at least one Alaska One-Stop Job Center. Infrastructure costs are identified as the space, equipment, supplies, and network costs necessary for the operation of the One-Stop center and benefiting WIOA required partner programs operated by the parties to the IFA.

The IFA states the following:

- **Infrastructure Space**

Space costs are calculated based on current lease diagrams for each location, identifying areas used by the common participant, notably the resource rooms and workshop rooms where the majority of customers engage

in self-service, staff-facilitated, and staff-assisted WIOA career services. For each job center, this space is multiplied by the current lease cost to arrive at the Infrastructure Space Total Annual Cost.

- **Infrastructure Operations**

Operational costs are calculated based upon the inventory of public accessible resource room and workshop personal computers (PCs); public accessible copiers, printers, and associated supplies (e.g., paper and toner); and public furniture (e.g., customer workstation chairs, etc.). Server costs are based upon the percentage of public use. Technology equipment (PC's, copiers, printers, and servers) costs per job center are then multiplied by a factor of 0.25 to represent a four-year, industry standard replacement schedule. Technology network costs are attributed to each job center based upon annual software and internet service costs.

- **Additional Costs - Technology Staff**

Included in the scope of the IFA is the cost for staff directly supporting the technology related services accessed through the job center's public accessible technology resources. These costs are determined by each job center's number of supported public access PCs.

- **Additional Costs - IFA Management**

These are costs directly associated with the development of ongoing annual data matching performed by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development Research and Analysis section in support of this IFA.

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

IELCE Competition and Grant Awards

In Alaska, the IELCE program is a statewide grant. Alaska held an open competition in March 2021 for the IELCE program, resulting in an award to Alaska Literacy Program (ALP) of a four-year grant for PY 2021-PY 2025. ALP offers supports and services in the Anchorage area and in partnership with other regional grantees to target professionals due to limited resources and funding.

Integrated Education and Training (IET) Activities

As the IELCE provider, ALP is a full-service ELL program. It employs full- and part-time staff to recruit, train, certify, and support volunteer teachers and tutors to teach reading, writing and speaking English to adults, as well as workplace literacy and test preparation. Included in ALP programming is family literacy to help parents navigate school systems, read to their children, and be involved in their children's education.

Programmatic successes implemented include a streamlined process to move students from ELL classes into test-preparation classes, so that they can reach their education and certification goals. As a result of adding these classes, ALP's test preparation classes have resulted in 50 percent of ELL students' participation.

Through PY 2023, ALP offered 172 in-person classes, 63 online classes, and eight off-site classes. Classes are offered in eight-week quarters and a summer session. By June 30, 2024, the provider had offered classes in English, Citizenship, and Workforce Development to 1,099 students.

The State AAE Office works closely with ALP on IET design by providing statewide professional development and one-on-one training, including assisting with designing IETs as needed. The biggest challenge with this model is providing IETs virtually. The AAE Office continues to work with ALP to be able to offer IETs on a hybrid basis.

In PY 2023, ALP implemented an Entrepreneurship IET designed for ELL students that integrated English instruction. In calendar year 2023, data indicated that small businesses accounted for 99.1 percent of all business (71,781 small businesses) and 52.2 percent of employees in Alaska. ALP recognizes that small businesses are important to the Alaskan economy and provided instruction in starting and maintaining a small business to eight students. At the end of PY 2023,

students submitted business plans, provided presentations on their business, and took the US Entrepreneurship Certification Exam. Six students successfully completed the program. Students were referred to Anchorage Community Land Trust's Set-up Shop program to start their businesses.

Alaska communities are in dire need of childcare, with 61 percent of Alaska's communities in a childcare desert and no reliable providers available. With the success of the Entrepreneurship IET and the need for home childcare programs in Alaska, ALP is began working with the State AAE Office in PY 2023 to plan for a new IET in childcare entrepreneurship to be implemented in PY 2024.

ALP continues to grow their Peer Leader Navigator (PLN) program and graduated eight new PLNs in cohort 11 to assist community members to navigate barriers in health access, food, housing, and financial insecurity. In PY 2023, ALP continued the expansion of the program into other regions of Alaska, specifically Kenai Peninsula and Kodiak. The expansion project includes educating regional adult education programs and local partners, and recruitment of new PLNs in the regions to participate in training in PY 2024.

Finally, in partnership with Alaska Primary Care Associates, ALP conducted Pre-Apprenticeship Training in Healthcare (PATH) classes to ELL students using the IET model. During PY 2023, two new classes were successfully completed with 32 new graduates. With over 80 percent of the graduates continuing to additional training, post-secondary education, or employment.

All of ALP's IET programs are offered as a hybrid program to students across the State of Alaska.

Unsubsidized Employment (243(c)(1))

One of the challenges faced by the IELCE program is employer input into programs and needs. As such, ALP partnered with the Anchorage Midtown Job Center to provide roundtables to employers from in-demand industries to discuss barriers that ELLs face during recruitment, on-boarding, and on the job. In PY 2023, two roundtable discussions with seven employers were conducted. Based on discussions, employers approached ALP to create a referral system and provide education to staff members on how to help ELLs be successful in their job.

ALP also encourages Anchorage ELL students to participate in the PLN program, which requires a year of training to develop knowledge and skills. PLNs promote disease prevention and health activities to their communities. In PY 2023, PLNs participated in five health fairs, taught four classes on health literacy, and participated in eight events to educate community members on health matters. They provided community members with education, access to information, public assistance, information pertaining to the local school district, job support, food through food drives, and other local supports. The PLN program, through the expansion initiative, identified over five new local partners in Kenai Peninsula and Kodiak.

In PY 2023, ALP continued to provide two workplace literacy classes for Providence Hospital employees in Environmental Services and Food Services. The first class is for lower-level ELL students to focus on language improvement, digital literacy, and workplace context, such as accessing training programs at Providence. The second class is for higher level ELL students and focuses on skills needed for pathways identified by Providence into higher paying positions in the organization. These pathways are in healthcare, such as nursing assistants; administration; and accounts receivable. Each class served 12 students in PY 2023.

Local Workforce Integration (243(c)(2))

ALP relies on partnerships to achieve IELCE program goals to help place students into employment opportunities and assist immigrants to leverage their previous education. Partners include: the Anchorage Midtown Job Center, the Municipality of Anchorage's World Education Services Global Talent Bridge, Skilled Immigrant Integration Program (SIIP), Anchorage

Community Land Trust's Set-up Shop program, South Central Area Health Education Center (SCAHEC), and Providence Health Systems. These partners assist IELCE students to build career pathways and in IET for Direct Support Professional (DSP), Personal Care Aide (PCA), Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) and Community Health Worker (CHW) certification classes.

In PY 2023, ALP focused on strengthening communication and referral systems with the Anchorage Midtown Job Center One-Stop system. This partnership resulted in hosting a Job Fair for ELLs at the library in the neighborhood with the highest concentration of immigrants in Anchorage. Eight employers and 25 students participated. ALP and the One-Stop system also created a direct referral process where Anchorage Midtown Job Center staff visit ALP weekly, which allows ALP staff and PLNs to conduct a warm-hand off for ELL students.

Alaska is a Single Workforce Investment Board state. The Alaska Workforce Investment Board (AWIB) operates under the alternative entity provision in WIOA, [29 USC 3111\(e\)](#) and corresponding regulation [20 CFR 679.150](#) as described in the [Alaska Combined Plan for Program Years 2024 – 2027](#) at p.133. As such, the board roster is defined by Alaska Statute [AS 23.15.550](#) to include a seat for adult basic education. Although AWIB does not have a representative that is solely dedicated to the representation of IELCE, this seat is available to make recommendations to the board on behalf of the program.

Integrated Education and Training (IET) (AEFLA Section 203(11))

Implementation of IET Programs

The State AAE Office worked with local providers to build an IET model that works for providers across the state during PY 2023. Challenges and successes included:

- IETs offered in adult basic, secondary education, and IELCE programming;
- IETs offered in entrepreneurship, community navigators, healthcare (PATH) classes, paraeducator, introduction to veterinarian careers, introduction to healthcare, science and terminology, and office administration;
- Small providers with one to three staff who do everything within the adult education space including data entry, program coordination, intake, orientation, teaching, partnering with providers, etc., also offering IETs to their students;
- Larger programs, with available resources, assisting smaller programs by offering hybrid classes for their IET classes; and
- Programs able to focus on designing and implementing additional IETs since established IETs can be accessed by their students.

While IETs have not been formally measured, programs report IET successes and challenges to the State AAE Office through their quarterly reports.

Adult Education Standards

Content Standards

In PY 2023, Alaska continued to work with the American Institutes for Research to create Alaska specific College and Career Readiness (CCR) Standards for Adult Education and ELLs for alignment with Alaska's K-12 academic standards.

PY 2023 is the second year of the project and started with the development of English Language Proficiency Standards. The team created a committee that worked to align the standards of the project to Alaska's standards and included Alaskan context resulting in the publication of the [Alaska Adult Education English Language Proficiency Standards](#).

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

Recidivism

The Alaska Department of Corrections (DOC) is Alaska’s provider of the AAE Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals program statewide. Inmates are either referred by their Probation Officers to education based on risk-needs assessment or they voluntarily enroll in the program. Recruitment occurs during inmate facility orientations and through fliers posted in the housing units. All participation in programming is voluntary.

The DOC Reentry Unit reviewed data from adult education participants from PY 2020 (July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021) to study the correlation between program involvement, credential achievement, and recidivism. DOC measures recidivism as the percentage of individuals convicted of felonies who are released from DOC custody within a given year and who return to DOC custody within three years for any remand due to conviction (felony or misdemeanor) or probation/parole violation. Therefore, recidivism rates are viewed retroactively each year to measure the rate of those released three years prior.

PY 2020 data is the most recent data set available for analysis as it incorporates the three-year threshold required by Alaska statute to measure the recidivism rate. Full-time and part-time student participants’ data from AlaskaJobs, GED Manager, and the Alaska Corrections Offender Management System was used to determine education achievement prior to, during, and after their adult education period of participation while incarcerated in PY 2020. In addition, credential achievement and participation were compared to custody status over the three-year period to identify potential correlation between high school equivalency achievement and the rate of remand post-release.

Rates of participant recidivism were then compared to the known state recidivism rate of the general population of releasing offenders. Because they did not complete a full three-year post-release period, those individuals who were released at various times within the three subsequent years are not factored into the recidivism rate of releasing individuals within this report.

Credential Attainment by PY20 Adult Education Program Participants	
Participants Earning GEDs in Custody in PY20	37
Participants Earning GEDs in Custody Post PY20	19
Participants without Credential Attainment	105
Total	161

The cohort data in the table above reflects the 161 incarcerated individuals who participated in adult education in PY 2020. Of those, 44 have remained incarcerated with 10 having earned GEDs in PY 2020 and nine earning GEDs in subsequent years. Of the 161 participants, 117 individuals were released from custody with 85 of those individuals recidivating, which represents an overall 73 percent rate of recidivism for program participants.

Recidivism Rates Among Adult Education Participants PY20		
	Recidivated	Desisted
Released PY20 Participants who Earned a GED while in Custody	16	16
Released PY20 Participants who did not Earn a GED while in Custody	69	16
All Released PY20 Participants	85	32

The data also revealed that those who had released and had earned a GED while incarcerated had a recidivism rate (16 of 32) of 50 percent, compared to those who had not earned a GED while incarcerated (69 of 85) at 81 percent. The 50 percent rate of recidivism for those earning a GED was lower than the previous three years (PY17 - 52 percent, PY18 - 64 percent, PY19 - 68 percent), whereas the overall recidivism rate of program participants, at 73 percent, was an increase of 1 percentage point from the previous year of 72 percent.

The [Department of Corrections 2023 Offender Profile](#) (Alaska Department of Corrections, 2024) details Alaska’s most recently tabulated recidivism rate among the general population at 54 percent capturing those released in State Fiscal Year 2020/PY 2019, reflecting data from those released a year prior to the group surveyed in this report. Alaska DOC has yet to release the statistics from Fiscal Year 2021/PY 2020, the cohort reflected in this report.

Adult education program participants who earned a GED while incarcerated were 31 percent less likely to recidivate than those who had not earned a GED. The factors attributed to higher rates of recidivism for all adult education participants as compared to the general population of reentrants haven’t been fully explored. However, it may be deduced that the general releasing population have fewer individuals with learning disabilities, as well as a higher percentage of offenders who have already attained a high school equivalency credential, post-secondary education, or have had formal training in skilled trades, affording them more opportunities for employment and stability upon release.

Another factor may be that the PY 2020 cohort was enrolled during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many educational services experienced periodic and prolonged disruptions due to lockdowns and restrictions on movement to mitigate the spread of the virus. Correctional security and program support staffing also experienced vacancies and absences which impacted the availability of the adult education programs reflected in the drop of overall participation from 295 individuals in PY 2019 to 161 individuals in PY 2020, and a corresponding drop in credential obtainment from 84 to 37. These barriers affected student participants’ enrollment, engagement, and matriculation to earn the credential. In addition to the lack of important credentials, the impact of the pandemic on Alaska’s employers likely hindered participants’ ability to find gainful employment in a workforce upended by layoffs and closures, further jeopardizing stability upon release and increasing the risk of recidivism.