



California Adult Education

Annual Performance Report

Federally Funded
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title II Programs
Program Year July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020

California Narrative Report 2019–20

The United States Department of Education (ED), Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education (OCTAE) requires all states and territories receiving federal funding through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), Title II: Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) to provide an annual narrative report following the federal outline.

Introduction

The California Department of Education (CDE) provides adult literacy services to one-fifth of adults enrolled in the AEFLA program in the United States. The adult education program addresses literacy needs of individuals by providing adults with the skills and knowledge necessary to (a) gain employment or better their current employment; (b) obtain a high school diploma (HSD) or high school equivalency (HSE) certificate; (c) attain skills necessary to enter postsecondary education and training; (d) exit public welfare and become self-sufficient; (e) learn to speak, read, and write the English language; (f) master basic academic skills to help their children succeed in school; and (g) become US citizens, exercise their civic responsibilities, and participate in a democratic society. In the 2019–2020 year, WIOA AEFLA grantees shifted from mainly in-person programs to distance learning because of COVID-19.

Overview of California Literacy Needs

The lack of basic education and literacy skills continues to be an issue that affects millions of adults in California. A significant percentage of the population lacks English literacy skills and basic education to secure employment, obtain citizenship, pursue postsecondary or higher education, and participate in their children's education. In California, 28 percent of the population (ages 16-74) is at or below Level 1 Literacy and 36 percent is at or below Level 1 Numeracy. The following section quantifies the literacy needs into four primary areas:

- **High School Diploma or Its Equivalent:** Approximately six million California adults do not have a high school diploma or its equivalent even as California's graduation rate continues to improve, which currently stands at 83 percent. The dropout rate in California has fallen below 10 percent (9.7 percent in 2018) but is much higher compared to the national average of 5.3 percent. Although graduation rates have improved, significant achievement gaps among student subgroups persist.
- **Labor Force:** The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a much higher unemployment rate of 16.4 percent in April and May of 2020 compared to 4.2 percent in April of 2019. The number of unemployed Californians rose to 2.9 million in just two months, surpassing the 2.2 million peak during the previous recession. The unemployment rate has dropped to 8.2 percent as of November 2020. The need for workplace readiness skills, reskilling, and upskilling is of significant in California.
- **English Speaking Ability:** More than six million California adults speak English less than "very well." More than one-fourth of the national non-English-speaking population resides in California, and more than one-fourth of California's population is foreign-born (26.7 percent).
- **Economic Impact:** A projection of California's economy shows a trajectory of steadily increasing demand for a highly educated workforce. However, with the recent recession and budget constraints, because of COVID-19 the state remains challenged in meeting this demand.

Source of statistics: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/piaac/skillsmap/>. U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (2019: ACS 1-Year estimates and 2018: ACS 5-Year Data Profiles.)

State Leadership Funds

California uses state leadership funds to implement strategies identified in our unified state plan, develop and deliver high-quality professional development, provide technical assistance to sub-grantees, and monitor sub-grantees for compliance with grant requirements.

The Adult Education Office (AEO) at the CDE will provide training to sub-grantees to help students gain access to supportive services such as counseling, childcare, and transportation services. This training is part of the co-enrollment strategy developed jointly by all WIOA partners and others support service providers in California.

The majority of California's state leadership funds are used to contract services from three providers known as State Leadership Projects (SLPs). These organizations develop and deliver high-quality professional development and technical assistance. In March 2020, as it was evident that adult education programs were going to be closing down and preparing for on-line/distance learning, the CDE held a conference call with the SLPs to ensure that we were ready to support adult education teachers as they moved to teaching on-line. The SLPs moved quickly to provide training for teachers and continue to do so as online and distance learning is becoming the norm in California.

CALPRO (Professional Development) is responsible for designing and implementing a large-scale statewide professional development project for all California WIOA, Title II: AEFLA-funded and California Adult Education Program (CAEP) agencies. CALPRO provides opportunities for adult educators to interact and learn collectively in a group setting about evidence-based instruction.

CALPRO provided professional development (PD) training for agencies across the state. These activities included Communities of Practice, Training of Trainers, and Webinars. CALPRO facilitated asynchronous and self-directed online courses, an administrator forum, an instructor forum, and an IET Implementation Clinic. CALPRO also provided institutes to help new administrators with leadership development. The various topics covered accelerated learning to facilitate career pathways, Integrated Education and Training (IET), effective teaching, mastering the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) and College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS), implementation of English language arts standards, learning goal-setting, learner persistence, managing the English Second Language (ESL) multilevel classroom, using questioning strategies to improve instruction, lesson planning, understanding the adult learner, optimizing ESL instructional planning, evidence-based writing instruction in ESL and Adult Basic Education (ABE) classrooms, and designing programs for adults with learning disabilities. Lastly, a Training-of-Trainers Institute recruited 10 facilitators for a newly developed professional development module on Success for All Learners Through Equity. CALPRO offered 16 facilitated, asynchronous online courses serving 341 participants. Courses addressed the above-mentioned topics. CALPRO had nearly 100 professional development offerings with 2,490 participants.

CASAS (Assessment and Accountability) is responsible for providing a standardized assessment and accountability system for all levels of ABE, ASE, and ELA programs and for reporting program enrollment and outcome data to the state. California agencies use the CASAS GOALS reading and math test series for ABE and ASE, and the CASAS Life and Work listening and reading test series for ESL. CASAS assessments help place learners in appropriate levels of instruction, diagnose learner strengths and weaknesses, target instruction, and certify learner mastery at specific levels of instruction or readiness to exit adult education. CASAS offers computer-based assessments, CASAS eTests®, to help place students into

programs quickly; monitor learner progress; and generate student, class, and program level reports to inform instruction.

Statewide student and program accountability data is collected and reported using TOPSpro® Enterprise, a learner management and accountability software. The web-based software collects student demographics, records assessment results, and monitors and tracks student and program learning outcomes and goal-attainment data. It offers more than 80 data reports, including the National Reporting System (NRS) and Joint Statewide tables required for federal data reporting and the California payment points reports for California statewide data results.

Since the COVID-19 crisis and state lockdown in March 2020, CASAS has assisted agencies with transition to virtual instruction, remote testing, and online training. Throughout spring 2020, CASAS worked with OTAN to provide several workshops related to distance learning – providing guidance related to creating distance learning classes, collecting instructional hours, and recording learner outcomes in a distance-learning environment. The workshops continued through the late summer and fall. On April 30, and May 4, 2020, the CDE and CASAS jointly held four webinars that detailed California's remote testing policy. The workshops addressed assessing the Citizenship Interview Test (CIT), Civic Objective and Additional Assessment Plans (COAAPs) for EL Civics reporting, and remote pre-and post-testing.

CASAS provides timely training and targeted technical assistance (TTA) to all funded agencies to meet grant requirements and to improve data quality and student performance. The trainings cover California WIOA, Title II Accountability, Assessment Policy and implementation, and NRS data collection and reporting using TOPSpro® Enterprise. In PY 2019-20, more than 3,000 participants registered online for 110 online training sessions and 32 statewide face-to-face trainings. CASAS provides the data portal, an online tool that presents California NRS adult learner data <http://www2.casas.org/dataPortal/>) at the state and local agency levels.

CASAS hosted more than 80 WIOA, Title II: AEFLA regional network meetings statewide covering all 14 CDE areas. More than 1,200 participants attended the meetings that addressed state and federal updates related to accountability, the use of data to inform instruction, and statewide policy. CASAS also facilitated TOPSpro Enterprise network meetings in 8 regions to discuss software and data-related topics that served more than 200 participants, and held 80 online EL Civics Network meetings. CASAS planned and delivered four EL Civics conferences in Sacramento, San Jose, Pasadena, and Santa Ana reaching more than 600 participants.

OTAN (Technology and Distance Learning) provides technology integration training, online curriculum and online courses to support the use of instructional technology to deliver curriculum. OTAN hosts a yearly technology symposium, manages the state Technology and Distance Learning Plan for adult education agencies, and assists in expanding the ability of adult education providers to (1) communicate with one another and their adult learners through multiple methods, (2) develop digital leadership skills, and (3) provide capacity-building services to adult education agencies.

Because of OTAN's staff expertise, they were instrumental in the shift to online and distance learning in California. OTAN deployed programmers, trainers, and coordinators to create a COVID-19 resource page. This resource page was a primary link to help guide teachers to resources based on program area, technology topics and more. Through a collaboration of adult education teachers, the "I can go the distance" resource allowed teachers a helpful menu of options to engage learners through remote teaching. Through OTAN's collaboration with other leadership projects, the network of EdTech, enthusiastic teachers and the support of the

educational community, these resource pages soon became a primary informational resource for the adult education field throughout the state.

In addition, the California Department of Education asked OTAN to create and host online webinars and workshops to support teachers transitioning into remote teaching. On the OTAN website, the COVID-19 resource page, and the California adult professional development training site, OTAN created a training schedule, recruited subject matter experts and special speakers to provide online webinars on not only educational technology integration, but also on strategies for teaching at a distance, reporting distance learning hours, issues surrounding digital equity and access, and many more relevant topics. These webinars were well attended with 144 webinars offered between March 2020 and June 30, 2020. More than 16,000 adult educators registered for these sessions. Attendance records show that more than 15,000 teachers attended these webinars.

OTAN also collaborated closely with our other leadership projects, CALPRO and CASAS. Through these collaborations, OTAN was able to provide comprehensive training and support in all relative areas to ensure teacher confidence and support with new technologies never before used. OTAN created and scheduled OTAN Office Hours to support teachers needing additional help. These sessions were specifically designed to allow teachers to drop in at any time during a designated time period, ask specific questions, and receive dedicated assistance from training staff and subject matter experts. These sessions proved to be very popular and are likely to continue through the next contract year.

OTAN houses and supports several shared online courses through our Moodle server. With extended promotion and outreach, OTAN offered teachers throughout the state, including those in a non-WIOA funded agency, courses for English language learning, adult basic education, adult secondary education, including basic writing and basic math that teachers could use within a very short period. Staff developed the Maximizing Moodle Office Hour which allowed teachers the opportunity to get just-in-time training and support. These Maximizing Moodle Office Hours also proved to be very popular not only in the immediacy of assisting teachers with remote teaching using Moodle, but also in providing teachers support and training as OTAN implemented a major upgrade of Moodle.

The SLPs have provided “silver linings” that staff and adult education field members identified. Primarily, this created a sense of community that we are all in this together. Secondly, teachers often reported high confidence and self-esteem as they gained critical digital literacy skills under new conditions. Reports reflected positive attitudes of not only their own skills, but also of their readiness and willingness to do whatever it takes to connect and engage with their learners.

Monitoring: In addition to monthly desk monitoring, the AEO at the CDE uses a risk-based analysis to select sub-grantees for a more formal, comprehensive review process. Criteria used to determine which agencies are reviewed include new administration; overall funding amounts; chronic, late deliverables, and similar issues. The Federal Program Monitoring (FPM) Office at the CDE coordinates and schedules FPM reviews for all programs that are required to monitor federal funds at the CDE. Agencies selected for review attend several trainings where they receive detailed instruction on the monitoring process, the Adult Education Instrument used to guide federal reviews, and all evidence requests agencies are expected to upload. Moreover, to ensure the AEO conducts fair, thorough, and consistent reviews of all agencies, reviewers meet yearly to formally discuss performance and several times throughout the year informally to debrief all reviews being conducted throughout the state.

Performance Data Analyses

Enrollment 2019–20

The WIOA, Title II: AEFLA program offered at 194 local agencies, including three coalitions, enrolled 383,645 learners. Of these learners, 258,201 (67.3 percent) qualified for NRS federal reporting.

Enrollment in California AEFLA programs significantly decreased during PY 2019–20 by

12 percent. The decrease in enrollment is a direct result of agency closures and interruption of services because of COVID-19. This was especially evident in the fourth-quarter of PY 2019–20. In that quarter, approximately 25,000 students were actively enrolled compared to 200,000 in PY 2018–19. In addition, only 8,993 tests were administered during the fourth-quarter of PY 2019–20. This compares to more than 250,000 tests administered in PY 2018–19 for the same period.

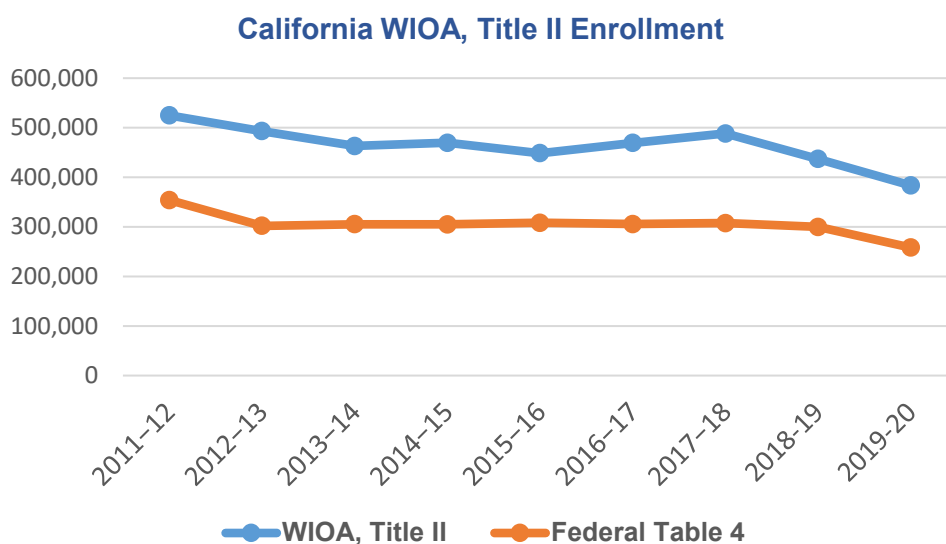
California continues to face unprecedented COVID-19 challenges in current PY 2020–21. The preliminary data reported in the first-quarter of PY 2020–21 shows a significant downward trend also. First-quarter enrollment in PY 2020–21 is 60 percent lower in comparison to first-quarter enrollment in PY 2019–20. Significantly, fewer students were able to take a pretest in the first-quarter of PY 2020–21 (36,000) compared to PY 2019–20 (184,000).

Adult learners who qualified for NRS federal reporting in 2019–20 reflect the diversity of the state. The largest ethnic groups of learners are Hispanic (65.5 percent), Asian (15.6 percent), Black (5.1 percent), White (10.7 percent), and two or more races (2 percent). Adult learners are more likely to be female (58.5 percent). There are 783 students who indicated non-binary as their gender. Adult learners between the ages of 25 and 44 (47.5 percent) comprise the largest age group. More than 77 percent of learners enrolled are non-English-speaking.

NRS Performance

The NRS data documents the continued success of California in addressing the state's basic skills needs by improving student persistence and learning outcomes. California has steadily improved its performance over time. In 2019–20, of the 258,201 learners who qualified for NRS federal reporting, 101,896 (39.5 percent) achieved at least one Educational Functioning Level (EFL) gain, including 12,377 learners who obtained a high school diploma or high school equivalency certificate. The number of POPs for the 2019–20 program year was 265,024, and the number of POPs with measurable skill gains was 102,614 (38.7 percent).

California's overall performance in 2019–20 (38.7 percent) declined compared to 2018–19 (45.8 percent) and 2017–18 (45.3 percent). Performance in lower literacy levels of ABE and ESL declined significantly compared to 2018–19. Performance declined in ABE, ASE, and ESL



except for ASE High. In 2019–20, California exceeded the overall state goal in ASE High. Similarly the persistence rate declined in 2019–20 (58 percent) compared to 2018–19 (68.6 percent) but exceeded the California state goal of 50 percent. More than 62 percent of the learners who persisted completed an EFL. The decline in persistence and performance is directly attributed to the many challenges of COVID-19.

The 299,720 learners who qualified for NRS federal reporting averaged 187.8 hours of instruction. The 205,589 learners who persisted in the program and took pre- and post-tests reported more than 258 hours of instruction.

The CDE has data-sharing agreements with the California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) and the Employment Development Department (EDD) to conduct a data match to provide postsecondary enrollment, secondary or postsecondary credential attainment, and employment and earnings outcomes. To supplement the employment outcome data match, local WIOA, Title II: AEFLA grantees conduct a universal survey of all students who have not volunteered a Social Security number (80 percent of enrollees).

The CDE uses a standardized automated follow-up survey in the TOPSpro Enterprise management information system to collect follow-up outcomes. This process includes an automated survey notification feature sent via email and text messages by agencies to students who have exited the program. When the student completes the survey online, results are sent automatically to TOPSpro Enterprise. Agencies are able to customize the survey invitation by adding agency logo and name, survey greeting, and a thank-you note. Survey invitations and the survey itself have been translated into eight languages. The Employment and Earnings Survey is conducted each quarter by all agencies.

Of those students who exited in PY 2018–19, and either a) had records that could be matched with the EDD, or b) responded to the employment and earnings follow-up survey, more than 50 percent were employed in the second quarter after exit. However, the overall reported percentage of students who exited program and achieved employment remains at 19 percent, as most could not be matched with the EDD file. For the students who did not volunteer a Social Security number, only 23 percent responded to the survey.

During PY 2019–20, the CDE provided training and materials for local agencies to conduct remote testing because of COVID–19. Local agencies continued to submit data to the CDE on a quarterly basis. The previously mentioned data submission structure allows quarterly analysis and early identification of incomplete or inaccurate data. During the March 2020 to June 30, 2020, pandemic timeframe the data indicated that students at the lowest literacy levels experienced the largest decline in enrollment. In addition, there was decline in the number of students enrolled in IET because of closures of training centers and some pathways no longer practical because of COVID-19. In terms of action and technical support, the state has focused on student recruitment and retention. The CDE implemented a statewide level AFELA Network meeting to disseminate successful retention and recruitment strategies to more schools.

Integration with One-stop Programs

The CDE, the California Workforce Development Board (CWDB), and the EDD, in collaboration with other workforce development agencies, coordinate education and training programs to assist individuals with overcoming barriers to employment. The CDE meets the one-stop requirements outlined in 34 CFR Part 463, Subpart J, through assurances and certifications documented in the grant awards issued to successful California WIOA, Title II: AEFLA grant recipients. Each eligible provider agrees to carry out the roles and responsibilities of the one-

stop partner and assures compliance with the requirements governing the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the local workforce development boards and the local one-stop infrastructure costs of the WIOA.

To support implementation and meet the intentions and parameters of the MOU, California separated the MOU development process into two phases. Phase I addressed service coordination and collaboration among the partners and was completed by June 30, 2016. Phase II addressed how to sustain the unified system described in Phase I through the use of resource sharing and joint infrastructure cost funding and was completed by September 1, 2017. The applicable Title II career services provided in the one-stop system, in addition to workforce preparation activities and English language acquisition programs, include outreach, intake, and orientation information; initial assessment of skill levels including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency; referrals and coordination of activities with other programs and supportive services providers; and IET programs.

Additionally, the CDE in collaboration with CWDB, EDD, and other core partners, developed strategies for co-enrollment. Statewide, an information notice was crafted and shared across the state strongly recommending that agencies raise their awareness and implementation of WIOA co-enrollment. As part of the co-enrollment work at the state agency level, training videos for all core partners have been developed and will be shared at the state agency level and then at the local level to raise awareness of services provided by each partner. Additional work in the co-enrollment project is the development of a common intake form and a common platform for sharing information locally. Other statewide work to further develop co-enrollment practices has been the PY 2018-19 EL Navigator project that involved 5 regional participants in California. The goal of the project is to provide extra support to English Language Learners -- many of whom were enrolled in California WIOA Title II: AEFLA programs -- and help them “navigate” the California WIOA Title I system to receive services such as career counseling and workforce training. In PY 2019-20, this collaborative work continued with the EL Co- Enrollment grant, which included four regional participants statewide, and focused more directly on tracking participants receiving workforce training and employment from Title I programs. In both program years, CDE participated and CASAS provided the data and accountability support to help evaluate the project.

During COVID-19, many WIOA Title I programs remained in operation, while school and college districts implementing Title II programs were largely closed. Many districts referred students to Title I services while Title II programs were transitioning to distance learning and remote implementation of services.

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) Program

In program year 2019–20, the CDE completed the second competitive Request for Application (RFA) following the 13 considerations specified in WIOA, Title II: AEFLA and awarded grants for a three-year cycle starting with PY 2020–21. Completing a successful grant competition in the midst of the pandemic was a major accomplishment, which was made possible by the work done over the past few years to move the RFA process completely online. The RFA solicited agencies to offer IELCE as defined in WIOA Section 243. As a condition of the award, Section 243 recipients must submit an annual IELCE Report that outlines their progress in implementing service approaches that provide adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement. In PY 2019–20, 115 agencies submitted an IELCE plan. Below are the number of plans submitted by industry sector.

IELCE Plans by Industry Sector	Plans Submitted
Health Science and Medical Technology	68
Business and Finance	52
Education, Child Development, and Family Services	36
Information and Communication Technologies	29
Hospitality, Tourism, and Recreation	26
Building and Construction Trades	12
Manufacturing and Product Development	7
Transportation	7
Marketing, Sales, and Service	6
Energy, Environment, and Utilities	5
Fashion and Interior Design	4
Agriculture and Natural Resources	3
Public Services	3
Engineering and Architecture	1

Per WIOA Section 243, the CDE required that language and literacy objectives be provided as a program in combination with IET. The IET model combines workforce preparation activities and occupational skills training with literacy activities to increase a participant's educational and career advancement. The IET service delivery may incorporate Co-Teaching or Alternate Teaching models and must include a single set of learning objectives. For agencies to receive funds under WIOA Section 243, students must be enrolled in an ESL program and a career program.

Civic Participation programs assess students through use of performance-based additional assessments that measure attainment of civic objectives categorized under competency areas such as consumer economics, community resources, health, employment, and government and law. Agencies may select from a list of 75 pre-approved Civic Objectives or may develop their own. For example, LAUSD developed an additional assessment to address health and safety standards, procedures, and protocols to prevent or prepare for health problems or crises. Responding to the pandemic required moving classroom instruction and assessment traditionally conducted in-person to a remote model. The CDE and its leadership projects (CASAS, CALPRO, and OTAN) provided guidance to providers on implementing effective remote instruction. To assist providers in administering assessments remotely, CASAS has developed guidelines and webinars on remote testing.

In 2019–20, the CDE EL Civics program awarded funds to 193 agencies to provide EL Civics educational services. Most EL Civics-funded agencies (116 agencies) also received funding for IELCE 243. More than 74,000 adults were enrolled in EL Civics and/or IELCE programs. Enrollment in both EL Civics and IELCE programs decreased by more than 44 percent compared to 2018–19 because of COVID-19. The largest challenge for IET programs was the ability for students to participate in workforce training. Despite the challenges, some programs were able to move their workforce training courses online and even increase enrollment. Some standouts include Tamalpais USD and Mt. Diablo USD, which made their Home Care Aide courses available remotely. The Health Science and Medical Technology industry sector is more important than ever as California continues to address the devastation of COVID-19. Another standout is Livermore USD, which started an Entrepreneurship program that thrived by serving students who were looking for innovative ways to make a living in the face of business shutdowns and high unemployment.

In 2019–20, there were 7,023 learners enrolled in Citizenship Preparation, 57,714 in Civic Participation and 48,473 in IELCE. More than 4,600 learners enrolled in IET under IELCE. Learners enrolled in Citizenship Preparation took the CASAS Government and History for Citizenship test and the oral Citizenship Interview Test to be more comfortable and better able to respond to questions. More than 5,974 learners passed the CASAS Government and History for Citizenship test, and 2,349 passed the oral CASAS Citizenship Interview Test. More than 66 percent of students passed one or more Civic Participation performance-based additional assessments. Of those who enrolled in IELCE/IELCE-IET under WIOA Section 243 and took performance-based additional assessments, more than 90 percent passed one or more of 243 COAAPs.

Adult Education Standards

The CDE, through the State Board of Education, adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in 2010. In March 2013, the CDE adopted the CCRS. In March 2014, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction announced the Standards for Career Ready Practice (SCRp). The SCRp are taught and reinforced in all career exploration and preparation programs or integrated into core curriculum, with increasingly higher levels of complexity and expectation as a student advances through a program of study.

The CDE Adult Education Office has aligned its content standards to the state-adopted challenging academics of CCSS and CCRS. The California adult education high school diploma meets the same standards as required for the K–12 high school diploma. The CDE has developed and implemented curriculum and assessment standards within ABE and ESL to meet the EFLs established by the NRS and to achieve the K–8 academic literacy objectives established by the state's standards and frameworks. The CDE along with the SLPs delivered technical assistance and professional development to enable teachers to deliver intentional, standards-based instruction in the online environment. CALPRO provided professional learning opportunities on topics including mastering the English language proficiency standards (ELPS) and College and CCRS, implementation of English language arts standards, and evidence-based writing instruction in ESL and Adult Basic Education (ABE) classrooms.

Local adult education programs are aligned to CCSS, CCRS, and ELPS for Adult Education providing standards-based contextualized curriculum, evidence-based instruction, and assessment focusing on the skills that enable learners to participate more fully within society as citizens, workers, and family members. Please refer to the CDE website for additional information on the Adult Education Standard <https://www.cde.ca.gov/re/cc/>.

Programs for Corrections Education and the Education of Other Institutionalized Individuals

According to the January 2020 *Recidivism Report for Offenders Released from the California Department of Corrections in Fiscal Year 2014–15*, published by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), the recidivism rate for the 39,205 offenders released between July 1, 2014, and June 30, 2015, was 46.5 percent. After reaching a high of 54.3 percent with the FY 2011–12 release cohort and subsequently declining to a low of 46.1 percent with the FY 2012–13 release cohort, the three-year conviction rate has been markedly stable.

Of the 39,205 offenders released between July 1, 2014, and June 30, 2015, 53.5 percent (20,970 offenders) had no convictions within three years of their release. Of the 18,235 offenders convicted, 47.6 percent (8,679 offenders) were convicted of felonies and 52.4 percent (9,556 offenders) were convicted of misdemeanors.

Commencing with the 2016 Report, CDCR implemented the State of California's definition of recidivism and used the three-year conviction rate as the primary measure of recidivism CDCR uses the following State of California definition of recidivism as

...conviction of a new felony or misdemeanor committed within three years of release from custody or committed within three years of placement on supervision for a previous criminal conviction.

CDC-R and other corrections agencies continue to face challenges in response to COVID-19. For several months in both PY 2019–20 and PY 2020–21, education programs in all facilities were closed. Students continued instruction by participating in independent study programs, with a small number of facilities participating in a pilot eLearning program, where inmates were allowed to use tablets to serve as textbooks. Overall, only 5 out of 35 facilities were able to complete WIOA, Title II: AEFLA reporting activities such as CASAS pre- and post-testing. CDC-R has also developed a Peer Tutoring program. This program has inmates serving as literacy peer mentors to other inmates housed within their immediate vicinity. This provided limited peer support but minimized cross contamination exposure.

CDC-R has resumed limited in person HSE testing. As of October 2020, it is administering HSE testing at less than 25 percent of its normal rate, with the passing rate holding steady at approximately 82 percent. From April to June 2020, CDC-R administered a total of 16 subtest administrations, and from July to October 2020 that total increased to 60.

All Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and Department of State Hospital (DSH) facilities have faced serious challenges as the result of COVID 19. Challenges are increasing as the pandemic is surging once again. All the facilities have changed their configuration for training/education as learners are not going out of the living residences for education or vocational classes. Keeping people together based on living groups is a major factor in reducing cross contamination. There are times when a residence has to go on strict quarantine that limits staff going in to provide services. Given the restrictions involved, all the programs are working to keep the adult education moving as best they can. In FY 2020–21, there were issues getting post-testing completed, but all facilities were able to get about 50 percent or more of the testing done. One facility anticipated a lockdown and conducted post-testing for as many learners as possible at the end of March. Numbers of students are significantly reduced for FY 20-21 due in part to limited admissions to the facilities and the need to periodically quarantine living residences. A review of the Data Integrity Reports shows that about two-thirds of learners received a pretest in the first-quarter.

All facilities are being very creative in the way they address instruction. Most are using an independent study type program where they are putting together packets for learners to complete and return weekly. When needed, staff on the residences can assist with the schoolwork. At Porterville, the residence staff who regularly work with learners in the classroom are now working the living residences and available to assist learners in that environment. They have also been able to continue learners in the High School Diploma program through Porterville Unified Adult School via distance learning. The one area in which there seems to be the most difficulty providing programming is vocational training.