State Plan Revision Study Guide

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education
Division of Adult Education and Literacy

 July 2016

# Contents

# Common Elements

Multi-Year Grants

**ICR Element: Describe how the eligible agency will award multi-year grants or contracts on a competitive basis to eligible providers in the State, including how eligible agencies will establish that eligible providers are organizations of demonstrated effectiveness.**

Response to State: *The State did not describe how it is distributing AEFLA funds within the State.*

***Panel Review Question:*** Does the State describe how it is distributing AEFLA funds within the State, i.e., what structure (regional or other) they are using and whether the methods and factors are formula or performance-based?

State Example: Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy funding will be used to provide services in all of the State’s counties. The funding allocated to each county will be based on the literacy needs identified within each county. Specific County needs will be determined by reviewing the number of citizens needing literacy services within each county based on data from the American Community Survey and the State Census State Data Bureau.

State Example: The adult education providers in the State are divided into five regions and include Northeast, Southeast, Southwest, Northwest, and Central Region. Although there may be multiple providers within an area, the State will reconfigure all 75 counties to align them with the 10 Workforce Investment Boards (WIB). The purpose of restructuring the State is to help align service delivery under WIOA and enhance the coordination and support of the overall economic development of the State.

State Example: A formula method will be used to determine the amount of funding and will take into consideration the literacy rate and the core indicators of performance as outlined in Title II of the WIOA law. The formula will be designed to consider the levels of performance in the local programs as compared to established benchmarks as a basis for an increase or decrease in funds.

Study Question: Have we described the structure by which we are allocating funds? (Examples may include workforce areas, economic development areas, or counties.)

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# Common Elements

**Distribution of Funds: Does the State describe the methods and factors the State will use in distributing funds under the core programs in accordance with the provisions authorizing such distributions?**

Multi-Year Grants

**ICR Element: Describe how the eligible agency will award multi-year grants or contracts on a competitive basis to eligible providers in the State, including how eligible agencies will establish that eligible providers are organizations of demonstrated effectiveness.**

Response to State: *The State did not describe how it is distributing Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funds within the State.*

***Panel Review Questions:*** Does the Plan describe how the State eligible agency is distributing AEFLA funds within the State?

Does it describe the geographical areas (regions or statewide) in which funds are distributed?

Does it describe the methods and factors used to distribute the funds; for example, whether funds are distributed to the geographical areas based on a defined formula, needs basis, or other methods or factors?

State Example of ***Geographical Distribution and Methods and Factors***: Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy funding will be used to provide services in all of the State’s counties. The funding allocated to each county will be based on the literacy needs identified within each county. Specific county needs will be determined by reviewing the number of citizens needing literacy services within each county based on data from the American Community Survey and the State Census State Data Bureau.

State Example of Methods and Factors: A formula method will be used to determine the amount of funding and will take into consideration the literacy rate and the core indicators of performance as outlined in Title II of WIOA. The formula will be designed to consider the levels of performance in the local programs as compared with established benchmarks as a basis for an increase or decrease in funds.

Study Question: Have we described the geographical areas to which we are allocating funds? (Examples may include, but are not limited to, workforce areas, economic development areas, or counties.)

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

Study Question: Does our description include what methods or factors are used to allocate funds to geographical areas? (Examples may include, but are not limited to, needs based, historical, or performance based.)

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

Response to State: *The State did not adequately describe the State's competitive process and identify how many years will be awarded in multi-year grants or contracts.*

Panel Review Question: Does the Plan adequately describe the State's competitive process and identify how many years will be awarded in multi-year grants or contracts?

State Example of Competitive Process: The State Department of Education (SDE) is the State’s eligible agency for adult education and literacy programs. SDE is responsible for administering funds and providing program/performance oversight to grantees.

Adult education and literacy eligible providers approved under Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) requirements will continue to receive funding through June 30, 2017, as long as they adhere to State and federal grant expectations, as measured through annual applications, financial reports, and program performance reports.

During grant year 2016-17, the SDE will implement a new competitive application process for all federal AEFLA funding that will determine the eligible providers that will be awarded funds starting July 1, 2017. The review of proposals will include rating responses to the 13 considerations in Title II of WIOA.

**TIMELINE:** The following steps will be taken in conducting the AEFLA competition:

* February 2017: SDE publishes three-year federal AEFLA Request for Proposals (RFP) aligned with the priorities in the approved State Unified Plan.
* February–March 2017: SDE provides technical assistance to inquiries from potential eligible providers.
* February–March 2017: SDE recruits candidates to review and score AEFLA grant applications.
* March 2017: Due date for AEFLA grant applications.
* March–April 2017: Reviewers review and score AEFLA grant applications.
* April 2017: SDE conducts review of budgets and other grant requirements and develops a rank-ordered slate based on applicant scores.
* April–May 2017: SDE announces AEFLA grant applicants that will receive funding.
* July 1, 2017: AEFLA grant providers begin grant cycle, programming, and funding.

State Example of Multi-year Grant: Funding will be made available on multi-year cycles, for a minimum of four years, for the provision of Adult Basic services. After implementation of services, providers will apply on an annual basis for continuing funding under Title II. All providers will be subject to the same funding cycles.

State Example of Multi-year Grant: The Department of Adult Education will award multi-year grants to eligible local providers through a competitive RFP process for the purpose of developing, implementing, and improving adult education within the State. The grants will be for a four-year cycle that applies to all programs.

Study Question: Have we thoroughly described our competitive process? This includes the process from initial announcement to the final allocation of funds.

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

Study Question: Do we indicate the number of years that will be awarded in multi-year grants or contracts (2, 3, 4 years)?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

Response to State: *The Plan does not fully address how the State will make the application available to all eligible providers consistent with section 231(a) of WIOA, i.e., the description does not restrict access of any type of organization.*

Panel Review Question: Does the Plan address how the State will make the application available to all eligible providers consistent with the Act; i.e., the description does not restrict access of any type of organization.

State Example: The State agency will provide funding to eligible local entities for the provision of adult education services through a competitive RFP process. Through this process, the agency will identify, assess, and award multi-year grants to eligible providers throughout the State. An eligible provider is an organization that has demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education activities to eligible individuals and may include: a local education agency; a community-based or faith-based organization; a volunteer literacy organization; an institution of higher education; a public or private nonprofit agency; a library; a public housing authority; a nonprofit institution with the ability to provide adult education and literacy services; a consortium or coalition or agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described above; and a partnership between an employer and an entity described above.

Study Question: Have we listed all the eligible providers under AEFLA? Does the list provide for the inclusion of any organization of demonstrated effectiveness?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

Response to State: *The State did not describe how it will determine demonstrated effectiveness.*

Panel Review Question: Does the Plan describe how the State will determine demonstrated effectiveness?

State Example: To determine if an applicant is an organization of demonstrated effectiveness, all applicants will be required to provide data demonstrating their ability to improve skills of low-literate adults in the applicable academic areas related to the RFP. Prior recipients will use data from the Adult Education student data management system to show how they met State-negotiated performance measures for all student levels, as well as for English language learners. New organizations will be provided forms to show demonstrated student learning gain, including low-literacy level and English language learners. An applicant also will be required to demonstrate its record of improving the knowledge and skills needed to transition successfully to postsecondary education, skills training, or employment. Each application will be reviewed to determine whether it meets the standard of demonstrated effectiveness. Applications that do not provide sufficient evidence of demonstrated effectiveness will be eliminated from the competition.

Study Question: Did we describe how we will determine demonstrated effectiveness? Did we describe the requirements for currently funded providers and potential new applicants to demonstrate effectiveness?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

Direct and Equitable

**ICR Element: Describe how the eligible agency will ensure direct and equitable access to all eligible providers to apply and compete for funds and how the eligible agency will ensure that it is using the same grant or contract announcement and application procedure for all eligible providers.**

Response to State: *The State did not describe in the Plan its competitive process in a manner that indicates it directly funds its grants and contracts rather than conducting the competition through a sub-State entity or other entity that is not the State eligible agency.*

Panel Review Question: Does the Plan describe the State’s competitive process in a manner that indicates that the State eligible agency directly funds its grants and contracts rather than conducting the competition through a sub-State entity or other entity that is not the State eligible agency?

State Example: The State eligible agency ensures direct access to apply for grants or contracts to all eligible providers in the State. All applicants eligible under Section 231 of WIOA will submit applications to the agency. They will not be required to apply through another agency or agencies in a multi-tiered process. The application processes will be designed so that direct application to the State eligible agency is clearly evident, customary, and nonnegotiable. Direct application will be the norm regardless of whether an applicant, if awarded funds, would be considered a grantee or a contractor.

Study Question: Have we described in our Plan that we will directly fund grants and contracts rather than conduct the competition through a sub-State entity or other entity that is not the State eligible agency?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

Response to State: *The State did not indicate in the Plan that the same announcement, application, and process will be used for all applicants for each RFP it intends to issue. The Plan does not indicate that all applications are treated in the same manner in terms of review and evaluation.*

Panel Review Questions: Does the Plan indicate that the same announcement, application, and process will be used for all applicants for each RFP it intends to issue?

Does the Plan indicate that all applications are treated in the same manner in terms of review and evaluation?

State Example: RFPs for all programs competed will adhere to direct and equitable provisions to award funds under WIOA sections 225 (Corrections Education), 231 (Grants and Contracts for Eligible Providers), and 243 (Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education). All RFPs issued under AEFLA will prescribe to the competition process outlined previously. Each application will be available to all eligible providers. Section 243 funds and section 225 funds will be competed through separate RFP processes. Applications from each competition will use review teams, scoring procedures, and final determination consistent with the description provided above.

State Example: The agency requires all eligible providers for sections 225, 231, and/or 243 to use the same application process. This ensures that all applications are evaluated using the same rubric and scoring criteria. The agency ensures that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply for grants or contracts. It also ensures that the same grant or contract announcement, application, and proposal process is used for all eligible providers through the grant management system. During the initial period of the grant submission process, any eligible agency that contacts the agency with an interest in participating will be provided the information needed. The agency believes that these approaches meet the requirements specified in AEFLA and is satisfied that every effort is made to ensure direct and equitable access.

Study Question: Did we describe in the plan that the same announcement, application, and process will be used for all applicants for each RFP we intend to issue (section 231, 225, and/or 243)?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

Study Question: Did we describe how all applications will be treated in the same manner in terms of review and evaluation?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

Program-Specific Elements

Aligning of Content Standards

**ICR Element: Describe how the eligible agency will, by July 1, 2016, align its content standards for adult education with State-adopted challenging academic content standards, as adopted under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)).**

Response to State: *(a) The State did not describe the process it is using to determine its adult education content standards are aligned with its standards of K-12 OR the State did not indicate that it is using College and Career Readiness (CCR) standards; (b) The Plan does not indicate the alignment of the State’s adult education content standards will be in place no later than July 1, 2016.*

Panel Review Questions: Does the eligible agency describe how it will, by July 1, 2016, align its content standards for adult education with State-adopted challenging academic content standards, as adopted under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1))? OR; Does the eligible agency indicate that it is using CCR Standards for Adult Education?

Does the Plan indicate the State’s alignment of its adult education content standards will be in place no later than July 1, 2016?

State Example: The State sponsored a gap analysis process, conducted by standards experts, to determine the degree of alignment between its content standards for adult education and State-adopted content standards for K-12. A Rubric for the English Language Arts/Literacy (ELA/Literacy) Gap Analysis and a Rubric for the Mathematics Gap Analysis guided the process. The review process compared the key elements of the K-12 standards with the standards for adult education (for the ELA/Literacy and mathematics standards). The framework of key elements represented the key instructional advances that the State-adopted challenging academic standards for K-12 demand. Reviewers determined the appropriate rating for each element, after comparing the adult education standards with the K-12 standards—that is, “Present,” “Partial,” or “Absent.” On the rubrics, the reviewers listed their justification for each rating. Reviewers then selected an overall rating for each element with regard to the alignment of the adult education standards—that is, “Aligned,” “Need Revision,” or “Need Substantial Revision.” Reviewers provided a summary of findings and recommendations for each element. Based on the results and recommendations, the State employed standards experts and program-level staff to revise their adult education standards to align with the K-12 standards.

State Example: The State Board of Education adopted the *College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education* (CCRS) for the Adult Education Program.

Study Question: Did we describe the process that the State used to determine its adult education content standards are aligned with its standards of K-12? Or, did we explicitly describe that the State had adopted OCTAE’s College and Career Readiness Standards?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

Study Question: Did we explicitly indicate the date on which the adult education standards were aligned? Is the date prior to July 1, 2016?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

Local Activities

**ICR Element: Describe how the State will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA, fund each eligible provider to establish or operate programs that provide any of the following adult education and literacy activities identified in section 203 of WIOA, including programs that provide such activities concurrently. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include, at a minimum, the scope, content, and organization of these local activities.**

***Response to State:*** *The activities listed in the Plan are not consistent with those listed in WIOA.*

*The Plan does not identify what activities would be provided concurrently with other activities.*

Panel Review Questions: Are the activities listed in the Plan consistent with those listed in the Act?

Do the described activities meet the statutory definitions?

Does the Plan identify what activities, if any, would be provided concurrent with other activities?

**Explanation:** The term “adult education and literacy activities” means programs, activities, and services that include:

* Adult education;
* Literacy;
* Workplace adult education and literacy activities;
* Family literacy activities;
* English language acquisition activities;
* Integrated English literacy and civics education;
* Workforce preparation activities; or
* Integrated education and training.

Each of the above activities is further defined in section 203 of the Act. In the State Plan, States are asked to describe which of the above activities they will fund eligible providers to make available to eligible individuals in local communities and, as appropriate, which ones will be provided concurrently.

In responding to this question, the State might consider the past need for particular services, the projected need for such services, and ongoing or emerging education, economic, or workforce development initiatives within the State. Some examples might include:

* A State that has been working on increasing low skilled individuals’ transition to postsecondary education (and plans to continue such efforts under WIOA) describes how it will fund eligible providers to integrate workforce preparation activities into all adult education, literacy, and English language acquisition activities.
* A State that has been working on immigrant integration initiatives (and plans to continue such efforts under WIOA) describes how it plans to fund integrated English literacy and civics education activities in addition to the services it will provide using section 243 funds. If the State also is focusing on career pathways as part of its immigrant integration strategy, the State might also describe how it plans to require that these additional integrated English literacy and civics educational services include concurrent and contextualized workforce preparation activities in order to more efficiently co-enroll participants, as appropriate, in integrated education and training offerings available through Title I.
* A State that has identified a need for family literacy services for English language learners describes how it will fund eligible providers to deliver English language acquisition and family literacy services.
* A State that is focusing on expanding low-skilled individuals’ access to career pathways in high-demand occupations describes how it will fund integrated education and training pilots for particular high-demand occupations. If appropriate, the State might also describe how it will fund more workplace adult education and literacy activities that concurrently include workforce preparation activities so that low-skilled incumbent workers can improve their skills and more easily advance to more high-demand occupations with their current employers.

In each case, the State would ensure that it is clearly describing particular adult education and literacy activities as they are defined in section 203 of the Act and providing a clear rationale for each activity or service that it intends to fund eligible providers to deliver.

Similarly, if a State were opting not to fund eligible providers to deliver a particular adult education and literacy activity, it would clearly state the particular activity and the rationale for not funding this activity. For example:

* A State plans to use non-federal funds only to provide family literacy services. The State notes in its State plan that it will not use AEFLA funds to provide family literacy activities; however, family literacy activities will be provided by eligible providers using non-federal funds.

Study Question: Did we list activities that are consistent with those listed in the definition of adult education and literacy activities in section 203(2)?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

Study Question: If my State names any of the defined activities differently than the Act, have we defined the term consistent with the definition in the Act?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

Study Question: If we didn’t list all of the allowable activities, was it because our State has decided not to fund that specific activity or was it left out by mistake?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

Study Question: Does the description of activities identify which activities would be provided concurrently with other activities?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

***Response to State:*** *The Plan does not address the scope, content, and organization of the State’s local activities.*

***Panel Review Questions:*** Does the Plan address the scope, content, and organization of the State’s local activities?

**Explanation:**  In their description of the adult education and literacy activities to be funded, at a minimum, States are required to describe the scope, content, and sequence of each activity to be funded.

Using the examples from above, complete responses to this requirement might include the following:

* A State that has been working on increasing low-skilled individuals’ transition to postsecondary education (and plans to continue such efforts under WIOA) describes how it will fund eligible providers to integrate workforce preparation activities into all adult education, literacy, and English language acquisition activities. *All adult education, literacy, and English language acquisition activities are required to be based upon the State’s standards for English language arts/literacy, mathematics, and science. Eligible local providers are required to describe, in their application for funds, their plans for supporting the transition to and implementation of the State’s standards. In the Plan, local providers are required to address professional development and ongoing assistance for all instructors; development and acquisition of curriculum and instructional materials aligned to the standards; monitoring and ongoing technical assistance; and a two-year timeline for the provider’s transition to and implementation of State standards.*
* A State that has been working on immigrant integration initiatives (and plans to continue such efforts under WIOA) describes how it plans to fund integrated English literacy and civics education activities in addition to the services it will provide using section 243 funds. If appropriate, the State might also describe how it plans to require that these additional integrated English literacy and civics educational services must include concurrent and contextualized workforce preparation activities in order to more efficiently co-enroll participants, as appropriate, in integrated education and training offerings available through Title I. *The English language acquisition component of integrated English literacy and civics education activities is required to align to the State’s content standards. In their application for funds, eligible providers are required to describe the curriculum and instructional materials to be used for the civics component of integrated English literacy and civics education, which must, at a minimum, include instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation. The State also requires that the civics educational component include basic instruction in U.S. history and workforce preparation activities and align to OCTAE’s Employability Skills framework or describe another widely accepted national employability skills framework. Eligible local providers are required to describe in their application for funds how the curriculum and instructional materials that will be used are aligned to the Employability Skills Framework.*
* A State that has identified a need for family literacy services for English language learners describes how it will fund eligible providers to deliver English language acquisition and family literacy services. *The English language acquisition component of the family literacy activities must align to the State’s content standards. Eligible local providers are required to describe in their application for funds the curriculum and instructional materials they will use and how those align to the State’s content standards. They are also required to describe how they will use tools and resources available through the National Center for Families Learning to deliver other family literacy activities.*
* A State that is focusing on expanding low-skilled individuals’ access to career pathways in high-demand occupations describes how it will fund integrated education and training activities for particular high-demand occupations. If appropriate, the State also describes how it will fund more workplace adult education and literacy activities that concurrently include workforce preparation activities so that low-skilled incumbent workers can improve their skills and more easily advance to more high-demand occupations with their current employers. *All integrated education and training activities must align the contextualized curriculum and materials they will use for the adult education component of the integrated education and training to the State’s content standards for ELA/Literacy, science, and math. They must also align all workforce preparation activities to OCTAE’s Employability Skills Framework. Finally, the occupational training component must be based on industry standards. Eligible providers are required to describe in their application for funds how the contextualized instructional materials they will use meet these requirements. All workplace adult education and literacy activities must be based on the State’s standards for ELA/Literacy, science, and math. All workforce preparation activities must be based on OCTAE’s Employability Skills Framework. Eligible providers are required to describe in their application for funds how the instructional materials to be used meet these requirements.*

Study Question: In describing the scope of the Adult Education activities in our State, did we describe what needs to be achieved and the work that must be done to accomplish the project?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

Study Question: Did we describe what the content of the program will contain, relating it to our State’s instructional content or, at a minimum, describe the general curriculum?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

Study Question: Did we describe the scope, content, and organization of local activities in a way that was easy to understand?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

***Response to State:*** *The Plan does not describe how the State will use the 13 considerations in section 231(e) in making funding decisions for its local grants or contracts.*

***Panel Review Question:*** Does the State describe how the State will use the 13 considerations in section 231(e) in making funding decisions?

***State Example:*** The State uses the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA to fund eligible providers by incorporating each of the considerations into the narrative portion of the application. The State attaches a point-based scoring rubric weighting each of the considerations. Applicants must provide narrative detail to demonstrate how they will meet each consideration.

Study Question: Did we describe how we will use the 13 considerations in making funding decisions for local grants or contracts?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

Corrections Education and Other Education of Institutionalized Individuals

**ICR Element: Describe how the State will establish and operate programs under section 225 of WIOA for corrections education and education of other institutionalized individuals, including how it will fund, in accordance with the requirements of Subpart C in Title II of WIOA, any of the following academic programs for:**

* Adult education and literacy activities;
* Special education, as determined by the eligible agency;
* Secondary school credit;
* Integrated education and training;
* Career pathways;
* Concurrent enrollment;
* Peer tutoring; and
* Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post-release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.

***Response to State:*** *The Plan does not indicate how the grants and contracts awarded with section 225 funds will be competed and will comply with the requirements of Subpart C in Title II of WIOA.*

***Panel Review Question:*** Does the Plan indicate how grants and contracts awarded with section 225 funds will be competed and will comply with the requirements of Subpart C (competition, direct and equitable access, same grant process, use of 13 considerations)?

**Explanation:** Under WIOA, states are required to run a competition to award section 225 grants to fund corrections education and education of institutionalized individuals.

In responding to this question, States may provide a description of their competition process for section 225 funds (whether using the same application process being used for section 231 funds or a different, separate application process). As part of this description, the State should explain how it will ensure:

* The same grant or contract announcement, application, and proposal process is used for all eligible providers;
* All eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply for grants or contracts;
* The agency uses the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA to fund eligible providers by incorporating each of the considerations as part of the review criteria;
* All applications are evaluated using the same rubric and scoring criteria; and
* As part of the State agency rating criteria, specific consideration is given to eligible applicants that indicate priority of service to individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program.

Study Question: Did we describe how we will competitively award 225 funds (i.e., competition, direct and equitable, same grant and process, 13 considerations)?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

***Response to State:*** *The State did not describe how it will carry out the following activities [specify] in a way that is consistent with the statute.*

***Panel Review Question:*** Did the State describe how it will carry out the allowable activities under section 225 in a way that is consistent with the statute?

**Explanation:** WIOA expands the uses of funds to support academic programs for criminal offenders in correctional institutions and for other institutionalized individuals. The expanded list of academic programs supported with section 225 funds allows states the opportunity to provide instruction in not only adult education and literacy activities and secondary school credit programs, but also provide academic programs that include special education, as appropriate; integrated education and training; career pathways; concurrent enrollment; peer tutoring; and transition to re-entry initiatives and other post-release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.

In responding to this question, states may provide a description of the types of academic programs they expect eligible providers to provide in correctional education programs applying for funding. Examples could include:

* If a State intends to provide career pathways, the Plan may provide a description of how programs will be designed to reduce recidivism by supporting incarcerated and formerly incarcerated individuals’ access to career pathways opportunities through innovative approaches that support academic achievement and transition to postsecondary training;
* Programs may include a component in which individuals participate in the State’s intensive pre-release transition program that prepares individuals for life outside of the institution and provides job readiness in collaboration with workforce partners;
* A State may require as part of the eligible provider’s grant application that the correctional institutions describe and define the academic program areas in which they intend to provide academic instruction, and describe how the agency will deliver any of these programs. Priorities for the State could be focused on increasing the number of incarcerated adults completing a secondary school credential, entering postsecondary education and training, and entering/retaining employment, *OR* adult basic skills programs may only include classes in Adult Basic Education (ABE), high school equivalency preparation, and English as a second language (ESL).

Study Question: Did we state clearly which activities from the list of allowable activities in section 225 we plan to provide?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

Study Question: Did we describe these planned activities in a way that is clear and consistent with statute?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program

**ICR Element: Describe how the State will establish and operate Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) programs under Section 243 of WIOA, for English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries.**

***Response to State:*** *The Plan does not adequately describe how the State will establish IELCE programs that provide educational services consisting of literacy and English language acquisition integrated with civics education; that is, instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation.*

***Panel Review Question:*** Does the Plan adequately describe how the State will establish IELCE programs that provide educational services consisting of literacy and ELA integrated with civics education; that is, instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation?

***State Example:*** Under WIA, the State has a longstanding history of providing English literacy and civics education. The State will leverage these past successes to meet the new requirements under WIOA. The State’s application for IELCE (i.e., section 243) funds will require applicants to describe how they plan to provide English language acquisition and civics education concurrently and contextually. The proposed activities and budget will be reviewed by the State to ensure that they meet all statutory requirements. Based upon our past experience under WIA, we can imagine a typical example of what service delivery might look like at the local level to be similar to the following:

An eligible provider provides the classroom (English language acquisition and civics education) instruction to a specific cohort of students, while partnering with another nonprofit or social entrepreneurial organization that then provides or coordinates timely and well-aligned occupational skills training, as appropriate, for particular participants from that cohort of students. For example, an adult education program at a community college partners with a local refugee training center to work with newly arrived refugee women. In this example, the college would provide contextualized English language acquisition instruction that includes general employability, workplace, and financial vocabulary as well as instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation. The curriculum includes an overview of important dates/events in U.S. history and their significance to current events. It also includes an overview of the U.S. government at the federal, State, and local levels. Local officials periodically serve as “guest tutors” to classrooms. As appropriate, the training center provides hands-on training and skill building opportunities to practice important interactions with coworkers and supervisors.

Study Question: Does our description include how our programs provide services consisting of literacy and English language acquisition integrated with civics education?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

**ICR Element: Describe how the State will fund, in accordance with the requirements of Subpart C in Title II of WIOA, Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education services and how the funds will be used for those services.**

***Response to State:*** *The Plan does not indicate how the grants and contracts awarded with section 243 funds will be competed and will comply with the requirements of Subpart C in Title II of WIOA.*

***Panel Review Question:*** Does the Plan indicate how the grants and contracts awarded with Section 243 funds will be competed and comply with the requirements of Subpart C (competition, direct and equitable, same grant and process, 13 considerations)?

***State Example:*** The agency requires all eligible providers for sections 225, 231, and/or 243 to use the same application process. This ensures that all applications are evaluated using the same rubric and scoring criteria. The agency ensures that all eligible providers have direct and equitable access to apply for grants or contracts. It also ensures that the same grant or contract announcement, application, and proposal process is used for all eligible providers through the grant management system. During the initial period of the grant submission process, any eligible agency that contacts the agency with an interest in participating will be provided the information needed. The agency believes that these approaches meet the requirements specified in AEFLA and is satisfied that every effort is made to ensure direct and equitable access. The agency uses the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA to fund eligible providers by incorporating each of the considerations into the narrative portion of the application. The agency attaches a point-based scoring rubric weighting each of the considerations. Applicants must provide narrative detail to demonstrate how they will meet each consideration.

Study Question: Did we describe how we will competitively award 243 funds (i.e., competition, direct and equitable, same grant and process, 13 considerations)?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

***Response to State:*** *The Plan does not address the activities that will be funded with section 243 funds.*

***Panel Review Question:*** Does the Plan address which activities will be funded with section 243 funds?

***State Example:*** In the State, section 243 funds will be awarded to eligible providers through the competitive application process outlined above. Funds will be used to support the operational expenses of local IELCE programs, including teacher salaries and benefits, classroom supplies, textbooks, and other items necessary to carry out instruction in English language acquisition, workforce preparation activities, and civics education. While the State plans to issue guidance and technical assistance to eligible providers on how to co-enroll participants in occupational training, as appropriate, we also anticipate that some section 243 funds may be used for similar expenditures to provide occupational training as part of an integrated education and training program in a limited number of cases.

Study Question: Did we describe the activities that we will provide in this section?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

State Leadership

**ICR Element: Describe how the State will use the funds to carry out the required State Leadership Activities under section 223 or WIOA.**

***Response to State:*** *The Plan does not indicate the State will use section 223 funds to support 223(a)(1)(A).*

*The Plan does not indicate the State will use section 223 funds to support 223(a)(1)(B).*

*The Plan does not indicate the State will use section 223 funds to support 223(a)(1)(C).*

*The Plan does not indicate the State will use section 223 funds to support 223(a)(1)(D).*

*The description contains activities that would not be considered allowable under WIOA.*

***Panel Review Questions:*** Does the Plan indicate the State will use section 223 funds to support 223(a)(1)(A) – pertaining to the alignment with one-stop partners?

Does the Plan indicate the State will use section 223 funds to support 223(a)(1)(B) – pertaining to professional development?

Does the Plan indicate the State will use section 223 funds to support 223(a)(1)(C) – pertaining to technical assistance?

Does the Plan indicate the State will use section 223 funds to support 223(a)(1)(D) – pertaining to monitoring and evaluation?

***State Example:*** The State Department of Education will use funds made available under section 222(a)(2) to enhance the quality of programming in the adult education system. Not more than 12.5 percent of the grant funds made available will be used to carry out State Leadership activities under section 223. Activities to be supported with federal leadership funds and extended using State funding include:

1. The State Department of Education will work collaboratively with other core programs and partner agencies to align and coordinate services for program participants. Leadership funds will be used to build the capacity of grantees to coordinate and align services by cross-training staff on intake/orientation, eligibility screening, and referral between partners, and other joint mechanisms developed through agency partnerships. In addition, the development of all components of career pathways will continue to be a priority with a focus on bridge programming and integrated education and training.
2. The State supports a statewide Adult Basic Education professional development (PD) advisory committee that meets quarterly to identify key present and future PD needs, develop PD plans and resources, identify and implement best practices in PD, coordinate PD activities, and review evaluation data from activities for continuous improvement of an efficient and effective PD system. This advisory committee has approximately 25 members and includes state ABE staff, PD providers, and local ABE instructors and administrators. The State PD system uses a data-driven planning and evaluation process to identify PD needs and set priorities for each year and evaluate the effectiveness of offerings. The results of an annual statewide PD needs assessment of local providers, along with evaluation data from previous PD efforts, research regarding best practices, and federal recommendations are used to inform PD priorities and the design and delivery of PD activities. PD activities are aligned to the State ABE PD standards, which emphasize research-based features of effective PD—longer–term, job–embedded activities with opportunities for collaborative participation and the application of new knowledge and skills. Both statewide and regional opportunities are provided for adult educators to develop and share their knowledge and skills, including professional learning communities, study circles, statewide and regional conferences, online courses, webinars, and others. Evaluation of PD outcomes, especially evidence of teacher change and quality of implementation of new knowledge and skills, is integrated into every initiative to ensure the effectiveness of PD activities.

State leadership funds will be used to support PD activities that focus on a variety of areas of emphasis, including content standards implementation, evidence-based reading instruction (EBRI), adult learning, research-based instructional methodologies, volunteer training and management, effective program management, integrated education and training, bridge programming, transition to postsecondary education, use of technology, distance education, universal design, serving students with disabilities, and volunteer training and recruitment. The State office contracts for ABE professional development services related to research-based literacy, numeracy, English language instruction, content standards, and transitions. These PD activities include Student Achievement in Reading (STAR) training and technical assistance; EBRI study circles, online courses, and resource dissemination; and implementation of content standards. In addition, the State ABE office contracts to deliver PD and technical assistance in the arena of serving adults with disabilities. The disabilities service provider also provides training on using Universal Design for Learning principles and strategies to address the varied needs of adult learners.

1. The State Department of Education will deliver technical assistance to eligible providers to enhance program effectiveness, increase the ability of providers to meet established performance standards, and fulfill obligations associated with being a one-stop partner. Specific areas of focus will include:
2. Increasing the capacity of instructors and programs to provide quality instruction in the areas of reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition, and distance education via implementation of professional development activities and associated technical assistance such as:
* STAR training and Evidence-Based Reading Instruction study circles;
* EBRI and writing online courses;
* Annual Language and Literacy Institute;
* Low–literacy Adult ESL Study Circles;
* Adult Numeracy Initiative (ANI) cohort training;
* Annual Math Institute;
* Distance learning professional development cohorts;
* Distance Learning Basics online course; and
* Online resource libraries in the areas of EBRI, STAR, writing, adult ESL, numeracy, writing, content standards, transitions, content standards, and project–based learning.

 (2) Enabling providers to establish, build upon, or maintain effective relationships with other core providers via training on referral systems, data sharing/reporting, integration of education with occupational training, and transition strategies for postsecondary enrollment or employment.

 (3) Using technology to improve program effectiveness through training and technical assistance focused on preparing instructors and program administrators to identify and utilize technology to enhance instruction, programming, and distance education. The State contracts to provide PD in the area of technology through activities such as face-to-face and online training in a variety of areas, including educational technology, digital literacy instruction, and distance learning. In addition, other training and technical assistance focuses on effective use of the statewide data system to maintain accurate student data and continuously improve programming.

The State office and PD providers will employ a variety of methods to ensure that information about proven or promising practices and models is disseminated to eligible providers and practitioners working in the ABE system. These will include activities such as:

* Local program site visits;
* A weekly electronic PD newsletter with information about training opportunities, high-quality resources, and promising practices for instruction and programming;
* Sessions at state and regional conferences showcasing promising practices and models;
* Webinars showcasing promising practices and models; and
* Job-embedded professional development activities, including professional learning communities, study circles, and peer observations.
1. The State will provide grantee oversight to include data monitoring, site visits, and a program improvement process for low-performing grantees.

Study Question: Have we thoroughly described how we will use State Leadership funds, plus State funding, to meet the requirements?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

**ICR Element: Describe how the State will use the funds to carry out the permissible State Leadership Activities under section 223 or WIOA, if applicable.**

***Response to State:*** *The State did not describe other permissible activities that it may fund.*

*The description contains activities that would not be considered allowable under WIOA.*

***Panel Review Questions:*** Did the State describe other permissible activities that it may fund? (This description serves as an illustrative list of activities a State may fund.)

Did the list contain any activities that would not be considered allowable under WIOA?

***State Example:*** The State will seek to develop and implement the use of technology applications, translation technology, or distance education, including professional development to support the use of instructional technology. This will be accomplished through:

* Utilizing the existing distance learning program to prepare students to pass the GED® tests;
* Ensuring that all providers integrate the state’s Adult Education Technology Standards in their practices; and
* Assessing and addressing the need for professional development surrounding the utilization of technology in delivering instruction and teacher training.

Developing content and models for integrated education and training and career pathways is also a priority. In establishing career pathways, the State is dedicated to:

* Conducting a pilot program through the Literacy Information and Communication System (LINCS) for English language learners to develop teaching strategies for integrating education and training using contextualization concepts in teaching; and
* Identifying and disseminating a model of best practices for career pathways design and implementation through the Adult Education and Career Pathways Work Group.

The State is also planning for integrating literacy and English language instruction with occupational skill training, including promoting linkages with employers. This can be accomplished through providing funding for basic skills and GED® preparation and partnering with local workforce programs to conduct I-BEST programming.

To identify curriculum frameworks and align rigorous content standards that specify what adult learners should know and be able to do in the areas of reading and language arts, mathematics, and English language acquisition, the technical assistance provided will take into consideration the following:

* State-adopted academic standards;
* Current adult skills and literacy assessments used in the State;
* Primary indicators of performance described in section 116;
* Support for standards and academic requirements for enrollment in non-remedial, for-credit courses in postsecondary educational institutions or institutions of higher education; and
* Where appropriate, content of occupational and industry skill standards widely used by business and industry in the State.

The State intends to accomplish this provision of WIOA by restructuring English Language Acquisition Content Standards to include integration of language acquisition and with workforce preparedness training. Further, professional development on integration of the College and Career Readiness Standards for adults with instruction for all students will be utilized. Through participation of the State interagency planning initiatives with the WIOA partners, the State’s adult education providers will collaborate where possible and avoid duplicating efforts in order to maximize the impact of the activities described above.

Study Question: Have we thoroughly described how we will use State Leadership funds, plus State funding, to meet State-identified priorities for permissible activities?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

Assessing Quality

**ICR Element: Describe how the eligible agency will assess the quality of providers of adult education and literacy activities under Title II and take actions to improve such quality, including providing the activities described in section 223(a)(1)(B) of WIOA.**

***Response to State:*** *The State did not adequately describe how the eligible agency will assess the quality of providers of adult education and literacy activities under Title II and take actions to improve such quality.*

*The Plan does not sufficiently describe how the State will assess the quality of its local programs.*

*The Plan does not sufficiently describe how the State will use these assessments (evaluations) to improve the quality of such programs.*

*The Plan does not include a description of how it will assess the quality of its professional development programs designed to improve instruction in the essential components of reading instruction, instruction related to the specific needs of adult learners, instruction provided by volunteers or paid personnel, and dissemination of information about models and promising practices.*

***Panel Review Questions:*** Does the Plan adequately describe how the eligible agency will assess the quality of providers of adult education and literacy activities under Title II and take actions to improve such quality?

Does the Plan sufficiently describe how the State will assess the quality of its local programs?

Does the Plan sufficiently describe how the State will use these assessments (evaluations) to improve the quality of such programs?

Does the Plan include a description of how it will assess the quality of its professional development programs designed to improve instruction in the essential components of reading instruction, instruction related to the specific needs of adult learners, instruction provided by volunteers or paid personnel, and dissemination of information about models and promising practices?

***State Example:*** The State Adult Education Division evaluates programs quarterly through a desk audit process in which measures such as average attendance hours, educational functioning level gains, number of students post-tested, etc., are reported and reviewed. The desk audits also allow programs to review operational aspects of the program such as the percentage of funds expended, completion of required professional development, and completed personnel activity reports.

The State Adult Education Division also performs an annual site visit for each adult education and literacy program to ensure that state and federal laws and policies are followed, review program performance, and connect with Local Education Agency Administrators. Based upon the findings during the site visit, regional program advisors provide technical assistance to program directors and staff to ensure continuous improvement.

Additionally, approximately every five years, a team of program advisors conducts an intensive program review through which Division staff assess each program in the following areas:

1. Program Management and Reporting

2. Financials

3. Advisory Committees

4. Personnel and Professional Development

5. Student Intake, Documentation, and Orientation

6. Program Policies

7. Instruction

8. Teaching/Classroom Observation

9. Technology

10. Recruitment/Retention

11. Collaboration

12. Facilities

13. Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

This program review process allows program advisors and the State Project Manager to thoroughly assess program operations, observe classroom instruction, and review State and federal laws and policies. Each program review is accompanied by a full financial review by the State finance department.

Once each program is reviewed, the program receives a report that indicates all findings, recommendations, and commendations. The program then develops and submits a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) which details how each finding will be remedied. The program director and program advisor work together to ensure that each finding is corrected, at which time the program and Local Education Agency are notified.

*Evaluating Professional Development*

In addition to the technical assistance provided through the evaluation processes, the State Adult Education Division provides varied professional development through the efforts of the State Learning Resource Center (SLRC). Through the SLRC, program directors, faculty, and staff have access to training in educational technology, student assessments, and assistance of students with disabilities, along with many other topics. The SLRC uses a statewide assessment of professional development needs of educators to plan professional development for the field in order to improve instructional and programmatic practices.

The establishment or operation of professional development programs to improve the quality of instruction pursuant to local activities will continue to be a top priority for the State in order to increase the success of student outcomes. Training will continue for local adult education/literacy providers on the use of resources available electronically for accessing curricula and sharing locally produced curricula with other providers. In addition, a stronger emphasis will be placed on ensuring that materials and training will incorporate the research-based components of phonemic awareness, system phonics, fluency, and reading comprehension.

In order to promote continuous improvement of professional development activities and the impact on student learning outcomes, the State Adult Education Division through the SLRC will include ongoing and systematic needs assessment and evaluation processes to not only provide information about the impact of professional development but also to provide data for refining and adjusting professional development activities.

1. Participant evaluations/surveys will be collected for all professional development activities. These evaluations will reflect the response of participants to the objectives, material, presentation, and trainer providers.
2. Evaluations/surveys will be aggregated and evaluated to determine quality of training, and adjustments will be made according to the results. These results will be analyzed for areas in need of improvement, and changes will be made accordingly.

To support local programs and instructors, a combination of methods will be used to assess the effectiveness of professional development training. Classroom observations, student educational gains of teacher participants, focus groups, and overall self-reporting tools will be utilized to determine professional development effectiveness. Data from the adult education management information system will be utilized to evaluate and determine if the professional development activities impact student learning outcomes.

In order to assess the quality of its professional development programs, the SLRC will use Guskey’s model for the Five Critical Levels of Professional Development Evaluation. The main evaluation levels include participants’ reactions, participants’ learning, organization support and change, participants’ use of new knowledge or skills, and student learning outcomes. The data from the evaluations will be used to analyze the effectiveness of the professional development program and the impact on student learning outcomes.

***State Example:*** The State uses various means of assessment in its annual and ongoing evaluation process, including site monitoring visits, desk monitoring, program improvement processes, and performance and financial audits. The results of these processes determine program improvement actions.

*Professional Development Quality Assessment*

Participants are surveyed after all workshops, conference presentations, and webinars to evaluate and provide feedback on the activity or event. In regional workshops, changes are made to future workshops based on input from participants. Programs review student data to determine if the training impacted student outcomes and also to determine areas where additional training may be needed. The annual training plan includes State priorities, input from surveys about training needs, and advice from a statewide professional development advisory committee. Survey results are reviewed with the professional development advisory committee to decide how the training would best be delivered, face-to-face or through online webinars. Workshops conducted on college and career readiness have been formatted for online courses, which include a post-test to determine if the learning objectives were met. Best practices are identified in the advisory committees, and this may result in a webinar delivered through the Department of Adult Education or presented at one of the annual conferences conducted by the State leadership professional development providers. Data from GED® test results are reviewed to determine areas in which students may need additional instruction. Math instruction for GED® preparation and Adult Basic Education courses will continue to be a priority for regional trainings and webinars.

*Monitoring*

The State will implement a Quality Assurance System that will ensure student performance improvement, financial accountability, program quality, and regulatory compliance of local providers in accordance with federal laws and regulations, State statutes and rules, and the provisions of an approved grant award. The monitoring component of the Quality Assurance System is risk based. Risk assessment is a process used to evaluate variables associated with workforce education grants and assign a rating for the level of risk to the federal Department of Education and the State Adult Education Division associated with each provider. In order to complete risk assessments, certain risk factors have been identified which may affect the level of risk for each agency. A risk matrix is completed for each provider. The annual risk assessment is conducted by the quality assurance team to determine the monitoring strategy appropriate for each provider. A range of monitoring strategies includes conference calls, improvement plans, desktop self-assessment, grant reviews, etc., with a more comprehensive strategy such as an onsite visit designated for providers deemed to be at higher risk.

*Actions Taken to Improve Quality*

If noncompliance finding(s) are identified, a corrective action plan will be implemented. The corrective action plan must identify the findings and specific strategies the provider will implement to ensure that finding(s) have been resolved.

* *Program Improvement Plan*. The State conducts annual performance evaluations. The evaluations process is a data-driven accountability system for adult education programs. In a competition year, all awarded agencies are expected to meet at least 90 percent of the State Performance Target or demonstrate improvement for each educational functioning level. In continuing years, an Adult Education Program Improvement Plan (AEPIP) will be required if the State determines that an eligible recipient failed to meet at least 90 percent of the State performance target or demonstrate improvement for each functioning level from the agency’s previous year completion rates.

An AEPIP will be required for each educational functioning level that fails to meet the required standards and will be implemented starting in the second year of funding. In addition to program improvement plans and other actions taken to improve quality, the following activities are available:

* *New Director Training*. Provides new directors with information such as federal and State guidelines, data collection and National Reporting System (NRS) reporting, and resources needed to administer their programs.
* *Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) and Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) Training/Trainers.* Through ongoing training, a network of trained professionals ensures the uniform administration and reporting of assessments used for determining federal-level gains.
* *Data Reporting and Program Improvement Training.* Provides training on the fundamentals of the NRS. Topics include monitoring, data analysis and collection, types of data and measures, assessments, data quality, and related information.
* *Technical Assistance*. Adult education bimonthly calls inform adult educators of program changes and reporting announcements, and provide opportunities to ask questions of State staff. In addition, technical assistance papers are posted on the federal Department of Education website.
* *Teacher Training*. Provides information and resources to support instruction in the areas of GED® preparation, college and career readiness, career awareness and planning, career pathways, reading, and math instructional strategies.

Study Question: Did we provide an adequate description of how we plan to assess the quality of our local programs?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

Study Question: Did we sufficiently describe how we monitor and evaluate local providers?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

Study Question: Have we described how we will use these monitoring and evaluation processes to improve program quality?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.

Study Question: Did we include a description of how we intend to assess the quality of our professional development programs?

State should add comments, notes, and questions in this space.