

Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program State Plan for the State of Connecticut

Program-Specific Requirements for Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Programs

The State Plan must include a description of the following as it pertains to Adult Education and Literacy programs under Title II, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA).

A. Aligning of Content Standards

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)).

With adoption of the Common Core State Standards in Connecticut, the new GED test and the new web-based National External Diploma Program, CSDE recognized the need to support a set of standards relevant to adult learners. Connecticut adopted the College and Career Readiness Standards for Adult Education released by the United States Department of Education Office of Career and Technical and Adult Education. These content standards align closely with the Common Core State Standards in Connecticut. Connecticut applied to OCTAE and was selected in December 2014 for participation in the College and Career Readiness Standards-in-Action project. Trainers participated in two workshops in Washington, DC, to be trained in the statewide implementation of standards. CT has a policy that all adult education providers have their ABE/GED and some ESL teachers trained in using the CCRS in their curriculum. Full implementation will begin no later than July 1, 2017. Beginning in the fall of 2015 state educators have received intensive Advanced Level College and Career Readiness for Adult Education standards implementation training. This training and technical assistance will enable the state to continue implementation of CCR standards and prepare for total alignment by July 1, 2017 by reaching all programs, adult education staff and students.

B. Local Activities

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 the adult education and literacy activities, including programs that provide such activities concurrently. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include at a minimum the scope, content, and organization of local activities.

Adult Education and Literacy Activities (Section 203 of WIOA)

- 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 that—
 1. Provides adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and
 2. Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

The State of Connecticut will award multi-year grants to eligible providers through an RFP process to enable providers to develop, implement and improve adult education and literacy activities. To ensure direct and equitable access for all eligible providers, the CSDE will publish a Notice of Availability in all major newspapers throughout the state and post the notice on the web page of the State Department of Education as well as the web page of our core partners, Department of Rehabilitation Services and the Department of Labor . The RFP will be e-mailed to all LEA, higher education institutions, to a master list of current and past providers which includes: community-based organizations, regional educational service centers (RESC), housing authorities, volunteer organizations, DOC, other correctional facilities and institutions; and to all providers and WDBs. A bidder's conference will be publicly advertised with the Notice of Availability and will be held at a central location to provide answers to questions regarding appropriateness of proposed projects and application procedures.

Agencies that are eligible for funding through the CSDE provided they have demonstrated effectiveness may include: • local educational agencies; • community-based organizations or faith-based organizations; • volunteer literacy organizations; • institutions of higher education; • public or private nonprofit agencies; • libraries; • public housing authorities; • other nonprofit institutions that have the ability to provide adult education and literacy activities to eligible individuals; • a consortium or coalition of the agencies, organizations, institutions, libraries, or authorities described above; and • a partnership between an employer and an entity described above.

Grants will be awarded to agencies that have demonstrated effectiveness in providing adult education and literacy activities to individuals who: • have attained 17 years of age; • are not enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under Connecticut state law; and • are basic skills deficient; • do not have a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, and have not achieved an equivalent level of education; or • are English language learners (ELL).

Local grants will be distributed based on the ability to meet the requirements of the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) purposes outlined in WIOA and have demonstrated effectiveness: (1) Assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and economic self-sufficiency; (2) Assist adults who are parents or family members become a full partner in the education development of their children; (3) Assist adults in completing high school; (4) Promote transitions from adult education to postsecondary education and training through career pathways; (5) Assist immigrants and English language learners to improve reading, writing, math, speaking, and comprehending the English language and acquire understanding of American government, individual freedom and responsibilities of citizenship.

The CSDE will make funding available to each of the five Service Delivery Areas (SDA) in Connecticut. The department, in conjunction with each WDB, will assess SDA needs and WDB goals. Eligible providers will select the appropriate priority area when drafting and submitting the RFP to the CSDE.

The RFP will be published for at least six-weeks to allow sufficient time between RFP distribution and proposal submission to the CSDE. RFPs will be evaluated by a review team comprised of interagency staff and experts in each priority area. Interagency participants will include representatives of the CSDE, the WDB and One Stop and Vocational Rehab partners. The review

team will evaluate each proposal using a standardized evaluation form based on required federal, state and regional criteria published in the RFP (including the considerations listed in WIOA, Title II, Section 232).

An internal edit check will be conducted by CSDE staff to ensure compliance with the requirements of Title II of WIOA, all applicable laws and RFP criteria.

The CSDE will use the following process to distribute funds to approved applicants: • not less than 82.5 percent of the grant funds shall be used to award grants and contacts under Section 231 and to carry out Section 225 (Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals); not more than 20 percent of such amount shall be available to carry out Section 225; • not more than 12.5 percent of the grant funds shall be used to carry out State Leadership activities under Section 223; and • not more than 5 percent of the grant funds, or \$85,000, whichever is greater, shall be used for administrative expenses of the eligible agency. Using the evaluation criteria published in the RFP, proposal reviews will involve a standardized evaluation process which includes the following items: the eligible provider's response to RFP requirements; the accuracy of the itemized budget in meeting line item limits and definitions; and the considerations listed in WIOA, Title II, Section 232. The weight of each consideration in the evaluation process will be defined in the RFP. Evidence required to support each consideration listed below has been defined and is printed in *Italics* with the corresponding consideration.

All allowable costs for the federally funded Adult Basic Education program are defined in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-87. This document will be used to determine reasonableness, allowability and allocability of costs. All costs must be supported by source documentation.

Using the evaluation criteria published in the RFP, proposal reviews will involve a standardized evaluation process which includes the following items: the eligible provider's response to RFP requirements; the accuracy of the itemized budget in meeting line item limits and definitions; the provision of adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation activities and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster; and the considerations listed in WIOA, Title II, Section 231 (e) of WIOA (*LISTED BELOW*). The weight of each consideration in the evaluation process will be defined in the RFP. Evidence required to support each consideration listed below has been defined and is printed within parentheses with the corresponding consideration.

The assessment of each grant application will involve an intense evaluation of the ability of the eligible provider to meet the literacy needs of the area and to comply with the expectations and statutes described within WIOA. The review process and scoring rubric will consider the following 13 considerations:

Considerations:

1. The degree to which the eligible provider would be responsive to:

A. regional needs as identified in the local plan under WIOA, Title II, Section 108 (as evidenced by a description of regional needs and how the applicant will be responsive to those needs); and

B. serving individuals in the community who were identified as most in need of adult education and literacy activities, including individuals with low literacy skills or who are English language learners (as evidenced by an objective statement of need accompanied by a recruitment and retention plan which targets these individuals).

2. The ability of the eligible provider to serve eligible individuals with disabilities, including eligible individuals with learning disabilities (as evidenced by an objective statement of need accompanied by a recruitment and retention plan which targets these individuals).
3. Past effectiveness of the eligible provider in improving the literacy of eligible individuals to meet state-adjusted levels of performance for the primary indicators of performance described in WIOA, Title II, Section 116, especially with respect to eligible individuals with low literacy (as evidenced by meeting or exceeding performance measures based on documentation from CARS and annual reviews for previously funded providers and as evidenced by comparable objective performance measures which demonstrate successful student outcomes for new eligible providers).
4. The extent to which the eligible provider demonstrates alignment between proposed activities and services and the strategy and goals of the local plan under WIOA, Title II, Section 108, as well as the activities and services of the one-stop partners (as evidenced by description of proposed activities and strategies and goals and how the provider plans to align them).
5. Whether the eligible provider's program is of sufficient intensity and quality; based on the most rigorous research available so that participants achieve substantial learning gains; and uses instructional practices that include the essential components of reading instruction (as evidenced by a program design suitable to achieve applicable performance measures – appropriateness of program design may be demonstrated by past performance of successful outcomes or documentation of a similar program design and associated outcomes).
6. Whether the eligible provider's activities, including whether reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, and English language acquisition instruction delivered by the eligible provider, are based on best practices derived from the most rigorous research available and appropriate, including scientifically valid research and effective educational practice (as evidenced by program design and /or curriculum).
7. Whether the eligible provider's activities effectively use technology, services, and delivery systems, including distance education in a manner sufficient to increase the amount and quality of learning and how such technology, services, and system lead to improved performance (as evidenced by program design and/or curriculum and the accessibility of hardware and software applications as appropriate).
8. Whether the eligible provider's activities provide learning in context, including through integrated education and training, so that an individual acquires the skills needed to transition to and complete postsecondary education and training programs, obtain and advance in employment leading to economic self-sufficiency, and to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship (as evidenced by program design and/or curriculum which focus on skills needed for postsecondary education and training, the workplace, and citizenship).
9. Whether the eligible provider's activities are delivered by well-trained instructors, counselors, and administrators who meet any minimum qualifications established by the State, where applicable, and who have access to high quality professional development, including through electronic means (as evidenced by appropriate degrees, certifications, and trainings).

10. Whether the eligible provider's activities coordinate with other available education, training, and social service resources in the community, such as by establishing strong links with elementary schools and secondary schools, postsecondary educational institutions, institutions of higher education, local WDBs, One-Stop Centers, job training programs, social service agencies, business, industry, labor organizations, community based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and intermediaries, for the development of career pathways (as evidenced by formal collaborations and the commitment of the provider to assess and address the literacy and non-literacy support services of participants).

11. Whether the eligible provider's activities offer flexible schedules and coordination with federal, state, and local support services (such as child care, transportation, mental health services, and career planning) that are necessary to enable individuals, including individuals with disabilities or other special needs, to attend and complete programs (as evidenced by program schedules and documentation of support services available).

12. Whether the eligible provider maintains a high-quality information management system that has the capacity to report measurable participant outcomes (consistent with WIOA, Title II, Section 116) and to monitor program performance (as evidenced by prior participation in or a commitment to participate in the eligible agency's Connecticut Competency System and Connecticut Adult Reporting System and to submit comprehensive, timely, and accurate data).

13. Whether the local areas in which the eligible provider is located have a demonstrated need for additional English language acquisition programs and civics education programs (as evidenced by area demographic data).

Adult Education and Literacy Activities (Section 203 of WIOA)

The CSDE will require eligible providers receiving grant funding to carry out corrections education or education for other institutionalized individuals and use the grant funds to operate the following adult education programs/activities:

Adult Basic Education (ABE)

ABE instruction is designed for adults seeking a high school diploma who are functioning below the secondary school level and lack the basic reading, writing and numeracy skills necessary to function effectively as workers, parents and citizens. Instruction can be individualized or offered in a classroom or a learning lab. Persons completing ABE are prepared to benefit from secondary level instruction.

ABE educational functioning levels are as follows:

- a. Beginning ABE Literacy (Grade Levels 0–1.9);
- b. Beginning Basic Education (Grade Levels 2.0–3.9);
- c. Low Intermediate Basic Education (Grade Levels 4.0–5.9); and
- d. High Intermediate Basic Education (Grade Levels 6.0–8.9).

Adult Secondary Education (ASE)

Connecticut Adult Education offers three distinct pathways for adults to attain a high school diploma.

(1) Adult High School Credit Diploma (AHSCD):

The Adult High School Credit Diploma program is a prescribed plan, process and structure for earning a required number of academic and elective credits. The provider must be a LEA or RESC. Credits toward a local diploma must be obtained through a prescribed plan. Each provider/town can enhance the basic AHSCD program but must adhere to the minimum state requirements: 1) use certified teachers and counselors; 2) adhere to CSDE requirements regarding assessment, enrollment, accountability and reporting; 3) meet required credit standards; and 4) ensure that a one credit course offers a minimum of 48 instructional hours. An adult who successfully completes the required credits of the AHSCD program is awarded a high school diploma by the providing LEA or RESC.

(2) General Educational Development (GED):

Adults who have not completed high school must demonstrate, through an examination, the attainment of academic skills and concepts normally acquired through completion of a high school program. Applicants for this examination must be at least 17 years of age and officially withdrawn from school for at least six months. Individuals who pass the GED Tests are awarded a Connecticut State High School Diploma. GED instructional programs, provided throughout the state in local school districts and a variety of other instructional sites, help individuals to prepare for this rigorous examination.

(3) National External Diploma Program (NEDP):

This program provides a secondary school credential designed for adults who have gained skills through life experiences and demonstrated competence in a particular job, talent or academic area. The NEDP is an online portfolio assessment program that offers no classroom instruction. An adult who successfully completes the portfolio assessment, as required, is awarded a high school diploma by the providing LEA or RESC.

Adult Secondary Education (ASE) programs must integrate functional life and employability skills into the curriculum, incorporate technology into the instructional process, and provide comprehensive counseling, transition and support services in collaboration with other community or human services organizations.

ASE educational functioning levels are as follows:

- a. Low Adult Secondary Education (Grade Levels 9.0–10.9); and
- b. High Adult Secondary Education (Grade Levels 11.0–12.9)

Workplace Adult Education and Literacy Activities

(1) Workforce Education Services

Programs will provide workforce preparation skills including literacy instruction, employability skills, career exploration and development, and links to employment, employment services and other options in order to respond to the evolving needs of the business community and promote individual

self-sufficiency. Workforce readiness programs offer instruction to support transition to work, entry-level employment and reentry into the workforce for unemployed individuals.

Family Literacy Activities

Family literacy activities are services that make sustainable improvements in the economic prospects for a family and better enable parents or family members to support their children's learning needs. Activities include the following: parent or family adult education and literacy activities that lead to readiness for postsecondary education or training, career advancement and economic self-sufficiency;

interactive literacy activities between parents or family members and their children; training for parents or family members regarding how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children; parent literacy training that leads to economic self-sufficiency; and age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences. Family Literacy Services are to benefit the child, the parent and the community. Program services will focus on enabling parents to become full partners in the education of their children and provide workforce preparation. Services will be of sufficient intensity and duration to make sustainable changes in the family.

English Language Acquisition Activities

English language acquisition activities include programs of instruction that are designed to help eligible individuals who are English language learners achieve competence in reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension of the English language; and that lead to (1) the attainment of a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent and (2) transition to postsecondary education and training or employment.

(1) Americanization/Citizenship

Americanization/Citizenship programs include instruction designed for foreign-born adults who wish to become United States citizens. Persons completing this program are prepared to pursue citizenship through the prescribed process of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services.

(2) English as a Second Language (ESL)

English as a Second Language instruction is designed for adults who have limited proficiency in the English language or whose native language is not English. ESL programs assist individuals to improve their English skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing in order to find or maintain employment, attain citizenship, become more involved with their children's schooling and make greater use of community resources. Instruction is provided in English as a unifying means of serving the broad ethnic diversity of limited-English-speaking adults.

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education

The term "integrated English literacy and civics education: means education services provided to English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, that enables such adults to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States. Such services shall include instruction in literacy and English language

acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation, and may include workforce training.

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (EL/Civics) programs must contain the following:

- contextualized instruction in literacy and English language acquisition, the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, naturalization procedures, civic participation and U.S. history and government;
- program design and goals that focus on preparing adults for employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency;
- curriculum focus on skills that will provide information and support in the skills necessary for the workplace;
- coordination with the local workforce system, and activities provided in combination with integrated education/training (IET) activities;
- improvement of literacy skills including speaking, reading, writing and numeracy in order to provide learners with the skills to apply English and mathematics accurately and appropriately in a variety of home, community, workplace and academic settings;
- opportunities for experiential learning in which participants are actively engaged in community pursuits are included in the program design;
- utilization of research-based instructional models that have proven effective in teaching individuals to read, write and speak English effectively;
- collaboration with community agencies that offer services to limited English proficient populations; and
- embedding technology literacy into the core curriculum.

Additional program activities directly related to the use of these funds include:

- participation in career pathways exploration and distance learning activities that impact competence in the workplace;
- integration of various hand-held technologies into classroom work including tablets and smart phones;
- creation of video oral histories;
- exposure to basic math vocabulary and interpretation of charts, tables and graphs;
- knowledge of the American education system with special focus on addressing the needs of families new to the U.S. school system; and
- cross-cultural perspectives, civic responsibility, democracy topics and independent projects.

Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education also provides 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.

Workforce Preparation Activities or Integrated Education and Training

The CSDE will continue to assist the DOL with expanding the development and implementation of the I-BEST delivery model offering industry-recognized credentials. Adult Education programs will work with WDB areas to provide I-BEST training to Jobs First Employment Service (JFES) clients who receive Temporary Family Assistance (TFA).

Programs must demonstrate a commitment to provide appropriate support services to students enrolled in the integrated pathway program. These services may include, but are not limited to tutoring or other academic supports, college navigation support, career planning, transportation assistance, and/or childcare.

Special Rule

Each eligible agency awarding a grant or contract under this section shall not use any funds made available under this title for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law, except that such agency may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy activities. In providing family literacy activities under this title, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

C. Corrections Education and other Education of Institutionalized Individuals

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 Title II, subtitle C, any of the following academic programs for:

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

Each eligible agency using funds provided under Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution must give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program.

The CSDE will reserve no more than 20 percent of its federal grant received under WIOA to provide programs for corrections education and education for other institutionalized individuals as described in Section 225 of the Act. Funding under Section 225 will include the following correctional institutionalized settings: prisons, jail reformatories, detention centers, halfway houses, community based rehabilitation centers or other similar institutions designed for the confinement or rehabilitation of criminal offenders. The CSDE shall also require that each eligible provider using grant funds under Section 225 to carry out a program for criminal offenders in a correctional institution shall give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program.

The CSDE shall require that each eligible provider use the grant funds to operate education programs as follows: 1. Adult Basic Education (ABE). 2. English Literacy Acquisition (ELA). 3. Secondary school completion (Adult High School Diploma).

D. Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program

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

CSDE will establish and operate English Literacy and Civics Education programs as a part of its adult education program. The term "integrated English literacy and civics education" means education services provided to English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries, that enables such adults to achieve competency in the English language and acquire the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, workers, and citizens in the United States. Such services shall include instruction in literacy and English language acquisition and instruction on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and civic participation, and may include workforce training. Since the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires an intentional connection to the workplace, to careers and to the workforce system (employers, Workforce Development Boards (WDB), Chambers of Commerce, etc.) for Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education programs, CSDE will work with the Connecticut Department of Labor to expand its Integrated education and training delivery model (I-BEST) offering industry-recognized credentials to Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education programs. Adult Education programs will work with WDBs in local workforce areas to provide assistance to local programs. CSDE will hold meetings with grantees regarding the requirements of the program and provide mandatory professional development sessions for EL/Civics instructors and staff on integrating career awareness, workforce skills, and career pathways. Eligible providers will design programs that deliver the activities under WIOA including the integration of literacy and English language instruction with occupational skill training, including promoting linkages with employers. Eligible providers must demonstrate their ability to prepare English language learners for unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency, and how they will integrate the program with the local workforce development system to carry out the activities of the program.

2. Describe how the State will fund, in accordance with the requirements of title II, subtitle C, Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education services and how the funds will be used for those services.

CSDE will issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education. The RFP requires the following for funded programs: program design and goals that focus on preparing adults for employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency; curriculum focus on skills that will provide information and support in the skills necessary for the workplace; coordination with the local workforce system; and activities provided in combination with integrated education/training (IET) activities. Funds will be specifically allocated for teacher professional development. Funds will be used for instructional costs (instructional pay, curriculum materials, and software that connects to career pathways) for ESL teachers. Funds will be used to serve those individuals who are most in need of the program. Funds will be distributed on an as-needed basis for programs that request an ESL program. To ensure direct and equitable access for all eligible providers, CSDE will publish a Notice of Availability in all major Connecticut newspapers and post the notice on the CSDE's web page. The RFP will be mailed to: all local education agencies and higher education institutions; a master list of current and past providers including community-based organizations, regional education service centers, housing authorities, volunteer organizations, the Connecticut Department of Correction (DOC), other correctional facilities and institutions; and to all current providers and WDBs. A Bidders' Conference will be publicly advertised with the Notice of Availability and will be held at a central location to provide answers to questions regarding appropriateness of proposed projects and application procedures. Local grants will be distributed based on the ability to meet the requirements of AEFLA Purposes outlined in WIOA Section 243. CSDE will make funding available to each of Connecticut's five designated local workforce areas. In conjunction with each WDB, CSDE will help to assess local area needs and WIB goals. The RFP will establish a minimum six-week turnaround time between RFP distribution and proposal submission to CSDE. A review team comprised of inter-agency staff and experts in each priority area will evaluate proposals responding to the RFP. Interagency participants will include representatives of CSDE, the WDB and One-Stop partners. The review team will evaluate each proposal using a standardized evaluation form based on required Federal, State and regional criteria published in the RFP (including the considerations listed in Section 231 (e). Eligible providers must demonstrate in their application for funds the manner in which the program will be delivered in combination with integrated education and training activities. These activities can be provided directly or through collaboration with WIOA or other community partners.

E. State Leadership

1. Describe how the State will use the funds to carry out the required State Leadership activities under section 223 of WIOA.

The CSDE sent a survey via Survey Monkey to all local program directors as well as all WIA funded providers on October 22, 2015, to obtain their input on the state plan. The survey listed 17 WIOA requirements for funding local programs and state leadership activities. Description of Required Activities: (1) The CSDE will work with other core programs and One-Stop partners to ensure that adult education and literacy activities are in alignment and to develop career pathways which provide access to employment and training services for individuals in adult education and literacy activities. The CSDE will collaborate with the DOL to assist local providers in partnering with One-Stop Centers to develop career pathways and provide access to employment and training services. Professional development will be provided to local programs, including orientation to adult education programs and services for One-Stop partners and other agencies.

Since the greatest need identified from the survey of local programs was meeting regional needs and demonstrating alignment between proposed activities and services with core partners, the CSDE will ensure that training and technical assistance will address these two issues. It will also assist local programs in becoming familiar with the regional/state plan to determine how it affects their programs. The CSDE will also work with local programs to establish stronger linkages with

partners such as local schools, WDBs, One Stop centers, and job training programs. (2) Connecticut has instituted high quality professional development programs to improve instruction. Training will be provided related to the specific needs of adult learners and information about models and promising practices will be disseminated. To enhance program quality and assure continued progress in meeting the Core and Additional Indicators of Performance, the CSDE shall award grants to eligible providers to deliver State Leadership activities, primarily professional development activities, with funds made available under this subtitle. In order to meet the various needs of our state, the CSDE may enter into partnerships with other states and/or the federal government in order to collaboratively fund projects that will meet individual needs and accomplish common goals. The CSDE shall not use more than 12.5% of the funds awarded under this subtitle for State Leadership activities. The CSDE will deliver a majority of its State Leadership and professional development services through the Adult Training and Development Network (ATDN). The CSDE's professional development model supports the implementation of the goals of Connecticut's Adult Education State Plan and consists of professional development basics and activities related to the implementation of career pathways. (3) The CSDE will provide technical assistance to local grantees in:

- the development and dissemination of instructional and programmatic practices based on scientifically valid research available and appropriate, in reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition, distance education, staff training and content standards;
- the role of eligible providers as a one-stop partner to provide access to employment, education, and training services; and
- assistance in the use of technology, including for staff training, to eligible providers, especially the use of technology to improve system efficiencies.

Although serving students with low literacy skills or who are English language learners or individuals with disabilities, including learning disabilities was not rated by most local programs as being one of their strongest needs, providers did express that they need assistance with curriculum materials and teaching strategies/best practices for students who are non-literate in their native language and with developing a scope and sequence curriculum for low level literacy skills and individuals with disabilities. Another area identified on the survey as a need is technical assistance in helping local programs identify instructional practices which will enable students to pass the new GED tests. Most programs felt confident in teaching reading, writing, speaking and English language acquisition, but one program stated staff needs help in ways to improve the depth of math instruction. The CSDE will also provide technical assistance in serving adults with special learning needs and disabilities including disability awareness sessions, resource and instructional materials, accommodation and instruction planning workshops, train-the-trainer sessions, referral information and telephone consultation concerning program issues. (4) The CSDE will conduct program monitoring and evaluation to ensure compliance with federal and state funding requirements and to determine the effectiveness of programs in meeting the needs of the adult population and will disseminate information about models and proven or promising practices within the State. The CSDE has in place a data reporting system for each local provider, the Connecticut Adult Reporting System (CARS). The CARS system can measure performance outcomes. The CSDE has developed a formalized follow-up and reporting process to report on the core indicators of obtaining or retaining employment and entering post-secondary education according to National Reporting System requirements. The follow-up and reporting process includes data sharing with other state agencies, including the Department of Labor wage information system. The CSDE will participate in the statewide data system which will assist the CSDE in working seamlessly with other partners while protecting the privacy rights of individuals. To provide the core service of performance and cost information for WIOA, Title II, Section 231 providers to the One-Stop system, the eligible agency will develop a report which includes each program's success in meeting the state adjusted levels of performance. This data will assist potential clients in identifying an appropriate adult education or literacy program in the local area.

2. Describe how the State will use the funds to carry out permissible State Leadership Activities under section 223 of WIOA, if applicable.

Description of Permissible Activities (1) The CSDE will provide training and technical assistance to local programs in technology applications, translation technology and distance education, including professional development to support the use of instructional technology. Training and technology assistance to local programs in technology applications, especially in the area of web-based communication (social media, phone apps, etc.) will be provided as well as assistance in finding access to computers. (2) The CSDE will develop and disseminate curricula including literacy curricula which uses instructional practices such as phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency and reading comprehension that research has proven effective for adults. (3) The CSDE will develop content and models for integrated education and training and career pathways. Connecticut Competency System (CCS) training sessions will be offered by both adult education and the workforce development community. The CCS is an integral part of the CSDE's career pathways, standards-based framework utilizing the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS) to connect curriculum, assessment, and instruction that is able to capture progress made by adult education learners. (4) The CSDE will provide assistance to eligible providers in developing and implementing programs that achieve the objectives of this title including meeting the state adjusted levels of performance. The CSDE will provide technical assistance in implementing the CCS for appraisal, instruction and assessment in a life-skills and an employability context, including new teacher training, CCS Facilitator training, One Stop partner staff training as well as the ordering and dissemination of CASAS curricula materials used in conjunction with the Connecticut Competency System. The CARS system will collect student demographic, attendance, assessment and outcome information for each student in the adult education program. The CARS system generates statewide and local demographic and performance assessment reports used for program planning, management and accountability. Data from the system allows the State to assess the effectiveness of local programs by measuring performance outcomes. (5) The CSDE will continue to partner with community colleges and other institutions of higher learning to assist adults to transition to postsecondary education and training. Training and technical assistance will be provided on effective methods of transitioning students. The CSDE will ensure that training and technical assistance will be provided, especially in areas such as employer engagement, the institution of career counselor position, and/or enhanced job responsibilities for current staff emphasizing transitions. The CSDE will also provide assistance in the implementation of training programs that assist adults in obtaining economic self-sufficiency. (6) The CSDE will work with the DOL to expand its I-BEST delivery model offering industry-recognized credentials to Integrated EL/Civics programs. Training and technical assistance will be provided to local grantees for the integration of literacy and English language instruction. CSDE will provide activities for the integration of literacy and English language instruction with occupational skill training, including promoting linkages with employers. The CSDE will assist local programs by sharing effective models, assisting local programs in engaging employers, and how to partner successfully with other agencies to place students in employment.

(7) The CSDE will provide technical assistance and training to promote workplace adult education and literacy activities by identifying curriculum frameworks and aligning 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; and taking into consideration the following: 1. State adopted academic standards. 2. The current adult skills and literacy assessments used in the State or outlying area. 3. The primary indicators of performance described in WIOA, Title II, Section 116. 4. Standards and academic requirements for enrollment in non-remedial, for-credit courses in postsecondary educational institutions or institutions of higher education supported by the State.

Connecticut training staff will continue to work closely with the pilot programs and will provide overview sessions throughout the State to increase awareness and knowledge. Also, CCRs have been incorporated into all workshops in math, reading, and writing. Working with ELA students in the area of workplace training was identified on the survey as a need; therefore, the CSDE will work with local programs to identify a variety of curricula for workplace training.

(8) The CSDE will develop and pilot strategies for improving teacher quality and retention. Training staff will provide sessions on learning styles and needs, facilitating adult learning, planning for instruction, and monitoring student progress.

(9) The CSDE will assist in the development and implementation of programs and services to meet the needs of adult learners with learning disabilities or English language learners.

F. Assessing Quality

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.

Performance Accountability: Performance Accountability assesses the effectiveness of grantees in achieving continuous improvement of adult education and literacy activities. The performance outcome measures shall consist of the following core indicators: 1. The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program; 2. The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program; 3. The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program; 4. The percentage of program participants who obtain either a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year of exit from program; 5. The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains towards such a credential or employment; and 6. The indicators of effectiveness in serving employers established pursuant to clause (iv). Setting Targets: Each fiscal year CSDE negotiates proposed target percentages for each of the core indicators of performance with the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education (OCTAE). Each local eligible program is responsible for meeting or exceeding the negotiated performance targets. Each program shall analyze progress towards meeting the targets on an ongoing basis. Each program must utilize the approved standardized assessments that provide the framework needed to measure program effectiveness. Central to the evaluation process is an assessment of Performance Measures established by CSDE to focus on continual progress, successful completion of the program area, and successful transition to a next step of employment, postsecondary education, or occupational training. For example, CSDE's performance measures for secondary completion programs focus on interim student progress by requiring providers to report on the number of students who pass one or more subsections of the GED practice test or earn one or more credits toward an adult high school diploma, and requiring them to report on number of students who earn a diploma or its recognized equivalent. Incorporating this performance measure into the evaluation process will ensure that the eligible agency and local provider assess each student's progress toward program completion and analyze significant changes indicated by this interim progress indicator. CSDE has also developed four Additional Indicators of Program Performance that require providers to address all aspects of program operation: recruitment, curriculum and instruction, support services and professional development. These additional indicators assure that programs will focus on long-term planning for program development and community responsiveness rather than focusing solely on current year issues and achievements. These indicators also assure that adult education providers develop learner and community-responsive programs and curricula so they can become an integral part of the local education system as it works toward lifelong learning and self-sufficiency for all community members, especially those most in need of literacy services. Core and additional Indicators of Performance will become a focal point for annual and on-site monitoring reviews and the basis for formative evaluation. Monitoring and Evaluation : To improve the quality and effectiveness of adult education programs, CSDE will conduct two

evaluation processes: an annual desk–audit for all providers, and an on–site monitoring evaluation for selected providers. On–Site Monitoring: An on–site monitoring evaluation will be conducted for a minimum of 25% of Federally funded adult education programs each year to determine the effectiveness of adult education and literacy programs and activities. All newly funded programs will be monitored, as will all programs that had non–compliance or RFP Requirement issues during previous year’s monitoring. These evaluations shall, at a minimum, consist of assessing the following areas: a) Compliance with all applicable laws and RFP guidelines, including ADA 504 and Section 427 GEPA; b) Program management and operations including scheduling and locations as well as staff credentials; c) Outreach, recruitment and retention practices including individuals with multiple barriers to education; d) Curriculum and instruction and use of technology; e) Support services including counseling and transition services; f) Professional development opportunities; g) Student intake, assessment and documentation procedures; h) Documentation of the program’s ability to assist adults in gaining employment, achieving self–sufficiency, and/or developing family literacy practices; i) Documentation of the program’s progress in meeting the Performance Measures set for each applicable Core Indicator of Performance; j) Documentation of the program’s ability to meet the Additional Indicators of Program Quality. Written reports of the on-site monitoring will be given to programs monitored. Local programs will have to submit a corrective action plan for any deficiencies noted during the visit. CSDE will observe classes and talk with teachers and program staff to determine if ideas from professional development are being implemented. Desk Monitoring: For the annual desk audit review, each provider will submit an assessment of Performance Measures and individual program goals as well as an annual expenditure report including all relevant fiscal records to facilitate an effective audit. Each program will also be required to submit data containing all program and student information stored in its Connecticut Adult Reporting System, including demographic, assessment and outcome data for each student enrolled. If a local program does not meet its outcome measures, it must complete a corrective action plan outlining how to make necessary improvements.

Professional Development : CSDE will provide professional development to local programs to improve program quality. Instruction will be designed to (1) improve instruction in the essential components of reading instruction, (2) instruction related to the specific needs of adult learners, (3) instruction provided by volunteers or paid personnel, and (4) dissemination of information about models and promising practices. Participants will be asked to evaluate the training sessions to determine if the sessions fit their needs. Changes are made to future workshops based on those evaluations. CSDE will include in its on-site monitoring an evaluation of local instructional practices to determine if its professional development is being implemented.

Certifications

States must provide written and signed certifications that

1. The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan. Yes
2. The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program. Yes
3. The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan. Yes
4. All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law. Yes
5. A State officer, specified by title in the certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan. Yes

6. The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan. Yes

7. The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan. Yes

8. The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program. Yes

Certification Regarding Lobbying

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Applicant's Organization **Connecticut State Department of Education**

Full Name of Authorized Representative: **Dr. Dianna R. Wentzell**

Title of Authorized Representative: **Commissioner of Education**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable)

(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>). If applicable, please print, sign, and email to OCTAE_MAT@ed.gov

Assurances

The State Plan must include assurances that:

1. The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding supplement and not supplant provisions). Yes
2. The eligible agency will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider serving each local area, as defined in section 3(32) of WIOA. Yes
3. The eligible agency will not use any funds made available under title II of WIOA for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not “eligible individuals” within the meaning of section 203(4) of WIOA, unless it is providing programs, services or activities related to family literacy activities, as defined in section 203(9) of WIOA. Yes
4. The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be delivered in combination with integrated education and training activities; Yes
5. The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to (1) prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency and (2) integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program; and Yes
6. Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program. Yes